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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

EDITOR: H. D. A. MAJOR, D.D.

SACRAMENTS: THEIR PSYCHOLOGY AND HISTORY

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A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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THE THIRTEENTH CONFERENCE OF MODERN CHURCHMEN

SACRAMENTS: THEIR PSYCHOLOGY AND HISTORY.

By the Editor.

THE thirteenth Conference of Modern Churchmen, held at Girton College, Cambridge, 6th—13th September, 1926, took as its subject *Sacraments: Their Psychology and History.* This number of the *Modern Churchman* contains the papers dealing with this subject delivered to the Conference, and also two sermons preached at its conclusion.

Bishop Neville Talbot, in his *Thoughts on Religion at the Front,* relates that 'an eminently pious Anglo-Catholic undergraduate at Oxford' startled him by saying: 'The fact is, I am not interested in God the Father.' Now, although Dr. Talbot does not tell us, we are quite sure that that young man was intensely interested in the Sacraments, particularly in the Mass; we should not be at all surprised if he had learnt the whole of the Latin Canon of the Mass by heart. It is the characteristic of the ecclesiastically-minded to feel this intense interest in sacraments. It is herein that they differ from 'the man in the street.' In many cases 'the man in the street' is interested in God the Father; he wishes that he were quite sure of His existence, and that he were on better terms with Him; but so far as the Sacraments are concerned, he feels no interest in them whatsoever, except to wonder how anyone can feel interested in them. But between the ecclesiastically-minded man and 'the man in the street' stands the humanist, or man of culture. He has his views about sacraments, and they are not those of the ecclesiastically-minded man nor of 'the man in the street.'

The Humanist and the Sacraments.

To the historical student of the Christian Religion it seems more than doubtful whether sacraments were instituted by Christ in the sense that He commanded them to be observed by His disciples. Moral principles and spiritual ideals, and not positive institutions, are the characteristics of His Gospel. Certainly in the long light of Christian history sacraments have proved bitter enemies to those ideals: they have been the largest and most easily opened door in the Church through which to admit sub-Christian teaching and practice in the form of pagan superstition. Hence certain ardent Church reformers in their desire to secure the purity of the Christian Religion have sought to minimize or even eliminate sacraments.

In the eyes of anthropologists the Christian sacraments are interesting survivals in the modern world of primitive religious rites of initiation and communion, but happily shorn of those terrible and repulsive practices and convictions originally associated with them. Though the horrors of primitive sacrifice are absent, their symbolism is preserved in the sacraments and so they linger with us like some ancient parish cross at which indeed few modern Englishmen kneel, but which our cultured classes view with feelings more akin to curiosity than reverence.

The psychologists, our medical and moral pragmatists, are quick to recognise the value of sacraments in the physical, social and moral life of human beings, 'The Baptism of young children is in anywise to be retained in the Church,' not for the reason which the Prayer Book assigns 'as most agreeable to the institution of Christ,' but as serving very useful practical purposes, not the least being as a check upon infanticide.

As for our aesthetes, they could as little do without sacraments as without our cathedrals and parish churches. They are there pre-eminently 'to be gazed upon,' rather than that we should 'duly use them.'

The Modernist and the Sacraments.

The Modernist sympathises with the humanist, but the sacraments have for the Modernist what they do not possess for the humanist, a religious use; they are for the Modernist a means of approach to God, a means for the reception of Divine Grace. Although they have not for him the profound importance of the truth of the Divine Fatherhood, yet they demand his serious interest as a Churchman. They are, alas! a subject of eager ecclesiastical controversy at present, and have a bearing on the vexed question of ecclesiastical order and Prayer Book revision. Moreover, he would like to be quite clear on various points connected with them. What is the authority for them, if it be not the authority of Christ's command? What precisely do they effect? How ought they to be treated? Would the Christian Religion gain or lose as a whole by their elimination? If retained, ought all loyal and faithful Christians to be compelled to use them as a condition of Church membership?

Some of these problems have considerable light shed upon them by the papers read at the Conference; some of them are not treated as adequately as could be desired. There are some which hardly came up at all for consideration and yet they are of importance. We propose in such brief space as we can command in this editorial to deal with some of them.

Sacrifice and Sacrament.

For instance, what is the precise relation of sacrament to sacrifice in the Eucharist of the English Church? The best treatment of this point is to our mind to be found in a paper entitled 'Eucharist and Sacrifice,' contributed by Professor F. C. Burkitt to the *Interpreter* in April, 1921. In that paper he writes :—

> 'Suppose we were to read in the Royal Academy Catalogue that picture No. 973 was labelled *Worship*, what should we expect to see? What sort of a scene does the word call up in our minds? What externals do we associate with Worship? Some of us think of Family Prayers—a household assembled together, while the master or mistress reads holy words from a book. Others might think of a prayer meeting, or a Scottish congregation in he Highlands standing while their minister pronounces the praise of God and asks for the needs of his flock, or it might be a gathering of friends waiting in silence for the

word of inspiration which may descend upon any of them. Again, there is a well-known picture, sometimes found in modern Anglican Prayer-books, of a group of little girls in the picturesque old-fashioned charity-children's costume, singing. The title, I think, is *We praise Thee, O Lord,* but *Worship* would do very well. Or perhaps we may be more ritualistically inclined. *Worship* may suggest to us *Benediction.* We might think of the priest in his bright embroidered robes taking a sacred object from a shrine and holding it up for the adoration of the faithful. And if our fancy should stray outside the Christian religion, we might picture to ourselves the heathen in his blindness bowing down to wood and stone.

But if we were to go to our Academy Catalogue and ask some contemporary of St. Paul or Seneca, a chance individual resuscitated from the First Century A.D. or B.C., what *he* understood by *worship,* I think the picture called up in his mind would be different. I think the scene he would visualise would look to us much more like a butcher's shop or an open air kitchen. At least the scene of *Worship* would include an animal to be killed, cooked and eaten, or (in certain cases) consumed by fire. To the inhabitant of the ancient world Worship and Sacrifice were inseparably connected. Speaking generally, the method of worship was sacrifice; sacrifice was the means by which worship was carried out.'

The Evolution of Sacrifice.

In the long process of religious evolution sacrifice offered to God as a mode of worship came to be regarded as open to criticism both from the rational and ethical standpoints. Rationally it was clear that God did not need the fat and blood of animals: moreover if He did need it, He was able to help Himself without man's assistance. This is the theme of Psalm 50.

> 'Thinkest thou that I will eat bull's flesh and drink the blood of goats? . . . All the beasts of the forest are mine and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills.'

Ethically, God desired righteousness and loving-kindness from man. Animal sacrifice could be no substitute for these.

> 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old?'

And Micah, the representative of Israel's prophetic order, replies:—

> 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'

This teaching is characteristic of all Israel's greatest prophets, whether it be an Isaiah, Amos, Hosea or Jeremiah.

There was a similar movement away from animal sacrifice in the Pagan world. That somewhat mythical personage Apollonius of Tyana, the Christ of Julian the Apostate, is represented as protesting against the sacrifices of animals.

'In all my actions I have at heart the salvation of mankind, yet I have never offered a sacrifice on their behalf, nor will I ever sacrifice anything, nor touch hallowed things in which there is blood . . . . for He (God) is in need of nothing, not even of beings better than we are . . . . but let man approach Him only with that best of words . . . . Reason (νοῦς), a faculty needing no instrument.'[1]

[1] Cited by Prof. Burkitt, *op. cit.*

The Primitive Christian Church adopted this prophetic and philosophic ideal of Divine worship. Yet it is not altogether philosophic. The philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius (in some ways the imperial prototype of Julian the Apostate) 'was unusually insistent on the sacrifice of bullocks—so much so that the white oxen are feigned to have drawn up a pathetic petition to him against their extermination.[2] But why did the Christian Church adopt an ideal of worship from which animal sacrifices were excluded? Was it because Jesus had more than once in His teaching cited with approbation the words of Hosea: 'I desire loving kindness and not sacrifice'? That is not the reason which any writer of the New Testament has given, although St. James and St. Luke might have given it. The answer appears to have been—at least after the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.—that Jesus by the sacrifice of Himself abolished the Jewish and all other systems of irrational sacrifice and instituted a new order of sacrifice, which is essentially rational, moral and spiritual.

Hence 'the reasonable worship' of the Christian consists in offering himself to the service of God after the example of the sacrifice of Jesus. The nature of the sacrifice of Jesus is carefully explained by the author of *Hebrews*—the chief expositor of priesthood and sacrifice in the New Testament.[3] Therein he writes, quoting Psalm 40, and making it the pivot of his exposition:—

> 'Sacrifice and offering, thou wouldest not . . . . Then said I, Lo, I am come . . . . to do thy will, O God . . . . By which will we have been consecrated . . . . ' (x, 5-10).

It is this sacrifice of Jesus which is commemorated and celebrated in the principal act of Christian worship, the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In this act of worship, after the celebration of Christ's sacrifice as commemorated at the Last Supper, the worshippers offer themselves to God with these words:—

> 'And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto Thee.'

Thus the sacrament of the Eucharist is both a symbol and effectual means of the Christian sacrifice—the moral, rational offering of human wills to God in the Spirit of Christ and for the advancement by co-operative service of that kingdom of God for which Jesus died.

The Roman Mass and English Holy Communion.

Herein the English rite differs from the Roman. We lack space to treat this difference fully, but a comparison of the two will indicate that the Roman is painfully sub-Christian: sub-Christian both in its conception of God and sub-Christian in its conception of sacrifice. The English rite, which we owe to that great Reformer and liturgiologist Archbishop Cranmer, while it differs both from the Roman rite and the Orthodox rite, reflects in a very wonderful way all that is most precious in Old and New Testament teaching.

The contrast between the Roman and the English rites is so little understood, and yet it is so needful that it should be understood at the

[2] Alice Gardner: *History of the Sacrament in Relation to Thought and Progress*, p. 17, Williams and Norgate (1921), a book to be heartily commended as an able and interesting treatment of the subject.

[3] In this connection we would venture to commend Archdeacon Paige Cox's little book, *The Word and the Sacraments*. published by B. Blackwell (1926), price 1/-. On p. 41 may be found a useful appendix on the teaching of the *Hebrews* on this point.

present time, that we venture to sum up the main point of that difference in the words of Professor Burkitt.

> 'What is the "Sacrifice of the Mass"? Surely it is this, that the priest, having (after prayer and by God's grace) duly and legitimately made present the Body and Blood of the Lord, proceeds then and there in the name of the congregation to offer this acceptable sacrifice to God the Father in memory of, and in representation of, Calvary.
>
> Where is the Sacrifice in the English Communion Service? Surely in this, that the congregation, having confessed, been shriven, having "assisted" at a due consecration of the bread and wine, and finally having received their own portion, do then and there offer unto God themselves, their souls and bodies, to be a reasonable sacrifice. By what has gone before, so far as ritual both of words and actions can effect anything at all, the congregation have been hallowed into the Body of Christ. . . . This is the Sacrifice of the existing English Use; this explains the "dislocation and disorder" that unthinking persons find in it.'[4]

Hence the deep difference between the Roman Mass and the English Communion is not the philosophic one of transubstantiation, affirmed by Roman, denied by Anglican, but *an entirely different conception of what is done in the celebration of the Sacrament.* As this did not come out clearly either in the papers or in the discussions of the Conference, we have ventured to deal with it here.

The Nature of Sacramental Experience.

In this study of the Eucharist we see clearly the nature of a sacrament. It is a symbolic act which seeks to effect that which it symbolises. This it may seek to effect *ex opere operato,* or, as we should say, by magic, or it may seek to effect it mystically by bringing the personality of the sacramentalist into moral and spiritual contact with Divine forces. It thus becomes a door by which the soul passes from its material and temporal environment into the presence of the eternal, and from that educative experience it draws cleansing, strength and insight.

It may be asked, what is the nature of the sacramental experience? It differs for different persons, and even for the same person at different stages. When Hugh Benson became a Roman Catholic, and received the sacrament for the first time in the Roman Church, he declared that he recognised the difference: hitherto he had never received the real thing. Did Benson's experience prove the Roman doctrine to be true and the English false? Doubtless Benson would have answered yes. The modern psychologist would answer no. The sacramental experience is determined by the sacramental faith of the communicant. The experience does not prove the doctrine to be true, but the doctrine believed determines the nature of the experience. Hence the sacramental experience of a Matthew Arnold is not that of a Pat Maloney. Various historical, philosophical and ethical considerations will help to determine the former, which will not affect the latter. It may still be asked, which experience is the truer, which brings the communicant most closely into touch with eternal reality? It is not easy to say. Christ would have offered the test of character and conduct: 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' In the late war it was not always the soldier-communicants who were the best comrades, although

[4] pp. 180–181 *op. cit.* This conception of the Eucharist is not English Protestant merely as some might suppose, it is really that of St. Augustine as Professor Burkitt indicates, and goes back through Augustine to St. Paul.

the most moving description of the Eucharist in modern literature was penned by 'A Student in Arms.' In the Christian world the non-sacramental Quakers stand out as a moral and spiritual force superior to their sacramentalist fellow-Christians. This consideration should help to free the Christian Church from the tyranny of obligatory sacramentalism. When it was believed, as it was for 1800 years, that Christ had commanded the observance of Baptism and the Eucharist, and that He had made salvation dependent upon their use, there was a reasan for obligatory sacramentalism which no longer exists in the face of New Testament criticism.

Modern and Mediaeval Views Contrasted.

Hence for Modernists the authority of the sacraments is not what it was for mediaeval Churchmen. This change was brought out very clearly in a speech made at the Conference by the Rev. J. S. Boys-Smith. He said :—

> 'The origin of the sacraments is vague and uncertain for our own teaching and practice now. That is partly because of the obscurity of the early accounts, and it is partly because of the very important change which has come, comparatively lately—the change, that is, from the view that when you get back to the real apostolic teaching you have got to the truth, to the view now that, though you may have got back to the apostolic teaching, that does not itself guarantee the truth at all; and secondly, because we feel there is much truth in the view that ideas and images and expressions are contained in our sacraments and have largely formulated or caused the particular teaching that they give, which is more or less accidental; hence we are influenced by ideas that have come in more or less accidentally, and yet have had the effect of forming the teaching that those sacraments have given. That is the first point—the origins are very uncertain and so are something to which it is difficult to appeal as a basis for present teaching or practice.
>
> After that we come on to the later history of the sacraments, first during the Patristic period and then during the Scholastic period. Through both those periods the fact of the sacraments as being necessary was undisputed. They were there based on some kind of authority; nobody doubted that they were necessary and that they would continue to be necessary. The thing to do was to find out what their meaning was, to find an interpretation of those sacraments; and later on, particularly in the Scholastic period, as Archdeacon Lilley has made very clear, that task was a very difficult one. The sacraments were undisputed, but why physical things like sacraments should ever have been chosen to mediate grace from God to man, and, still more, how that mediation was in any way possible by things like sacraments became very difficult indeed, so difficult that with a certain number of people the question was almost insoluble, and they had to appeal to miracle. To-day, it seems to me, the position is completely reversed. The authority of sacraments based on their origins has gone, and if we are to defend sacraments and find a meaning in them, what we have to base our teaching on is the fact of sacraments as mediating grace. It is no longer that we have the sacraments and that we have to find a meaning, but the fact of sacramental theory, or the sacramental idea in the world, is itself something indispensable, and that that is the reason for sacraments.

So far as I can see, that is a complete reversal. What was the difficulty in the Middle Ages has now got to be the basis of the use of sacraments themselves. We have got, if we are to find a real meaning in sacraments, to have more than a psychology of the use of sacraments; we have got to have also a philosophy that governs the idea of sacrament. If we can have that, well and good; but if we cannot have that, then the sacraments will perhaps be little more than survivals, which will go on and no doubt have their importance and use but will not be things of fundamental moment. It seems to me there the position has radically changed, and that in discussing our use of sacraments we have to bear that in mind.'

Deliverance from Obligatory Sacramentalism.

Hence the modern position is this. While the Church is freed from the tyranny of obligatory sacramentalism, and may not insist that membership in the Christian Church is determined by the use of sacraments by each Christian, yet she will not think lightly of sacraments in her 'co-operative discipline.' She will recognise the grave wisdom of the declaration made by that eminent moral philosopher Bishop Butler, of Durham, to his clergy, at 'that deadest moment in the eighteenth century'—the year 1751.

> 'External acts of piety and devotion, and the frequent returns of them, are necessary to keep up a sense of religion which the affairs of the world will otherwise wear out of men's hearts.'

Thus, though we may not call Christianity a sacramental religion in the sense that Christ made sacraments a part of His Gospel of the Kingdom, yet we shall recognise that to eliminate the sacraments from our modern Christianity would be to lessen its helpfulness for many. At the same time, we need to recognise the dangers to spiritual religion connected with the use of sacraments. Dr. Coulton, the eminent mediaeval historian, did good service at the Conference, when in a speech rich in examples drawn from the history of the Church, he maintained that wherever a materialistic and magical doctrine of the sacraments is taught in the Church serious sacramental malpractices ensue to the detriment of moral and spiritual religion.

Sacramental Idolatry.

Dr. Bouquet, a former Hulsean lecturer, put a pertinent question when he asked: 'Is there such a thing as sacramental idolatry?' We know well what the answer of the Reformers would have been to that question, whose longest Homily is 'Against Peril of Idolatry.'

For Modern Churchmen the best advice as to the way to answer that question is given by Dean Rashdall in his invaluable book on institutional Christianity, *Christus in Ecclesia*. In it he writes:—

> (1) In the first place, it is well to be tender and reverent towards the belief of those who think differently from ourselves on this subject. It is a pity surely to use strong language about the idolatry of the Mass and the like. . . . It is enough to say that it is intellectually unintelligible and spiritually unedifying.
>
> (2) On the other hand, I do feel strongly that those who do not hold this doctrine should not hesitate to say so. . . . Are we not too much afraid of some offensive label culled from the rich vocabulary of theological vituperation? There is a tendency sometimes to talk as though it really would be a good thing, if only it were true, that we

should be able to say 'the body of Christ is present on that table,' to talk as though it were a real spiritual loss not to be able to believe in such a doctrine. I venture to suggest that in this, as in many other matters, the utmost reverence may be combined with perfect intellectual clearness, perfect intellectual frankness. . . . The Holy Communion is worship at its highest. That surely gives it a sufficient title to our reverence.' [5]

Two Sacramental Dangers.

There are two things Churchmen to-day need especially to beware of in connection with the Sacraments. The first is being dominated in our conception of them by the authority of the past. We cannot secure finality there. The second is intellectualisation of the sacraments. This was the temptation which beset Patristic, Scholastic and even Protestant theologians. Sacraments are essentially mystical, dramatic, poetic, creative, but not dogmatic. They exist that we may duly use them, not dispute about them. Canon Streeter expressed both these thoughts in his concluding speech at the recent Conference on Reservation.[6]

'Catholic, Protestant and Broad Church have each made valuable contributions; but the time has come for us, having learnt what each of these have to teach, to work towards something new. The Bishop of Manchester once most truly said that, if the human race, as seems likely, has still some hundreds of thousands of years ahead of it on this planet, then *we are the Primitive Church.* Let us, then, fix our minds not on the *antiquitas mundi,* but on the *juventus ecclesiae.*

'Plato, when he came to a point when he felt that intellectual argument could no longer express the fulness of reality which he dimly apprehended, was wont to have recourse to myth. Therein he showed himself the greater philosopher, in knowing that philosophy has its limits. There are things which can be expressed in poetry which cannot be expressed in prose; or, rather, they cannot be expressed at all—but they can be suggested. It is an essential quality of all art that it can make us realise things which, if stated in the language of science or of logic, would necessarily be left unsaid. You cannot read the Gospels without seeing that this is taken for granted by our Lord. He speaks in parables, and the mode and the rhythm of His discourses is not that of a logician, but of a poet. And when "on the night that He was betrayed He took bread," what He did was, and was clearly intended to be, of the nature of an *acted parable.* That parable the Church re-enacts through the ages in order to bring its members into a spiritual, that is into a *living*, contact with Him, and with the life which He manifested to men in the supreme act of self-giving which the rite commemorates. All attempts to turn poetry into prose, to turn symbolic action into a metaphysically definable process, entail inevitably an actual loss of meaning—and, therefore, a loss of reality and power.'

If we may sum up the note which sounded again and again through the Conference speeches and papers, it is that, while Modernists wish to retain and use the sacraments, they are against the sacraments being used to teach a view of the Divine Nature which is lower than our Lord taught, or to teach that God acts in ways which are discredited by ethics and rendered highly improbable by science.

[5] pp. 45–47.
[6] *Reservation,* published by S.P.C.K. (1926), pp. 157–158.

OPENING ADDRESS

By the Rev. C. F. Russell, M.A., Headmaster of King Edward VI School, Southampton; formerly Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge; late Hulsean Lecturer.

AS this conference opens, there must be uppermost in all our minds a deep sense of the loss which the Churchmen's Union has suffered since our last meeting by the death of Canon Glazebrook. Of his work for the Union in other directions much has already been written—of his wise and sympathetic chairmanship of the Council, of his untiring activity in giving help and encouragement and advice behind the scenes to those who were in any way engaged with the problems of Liberal Churchmanship, of that rare and precious thing the youthfulness of mind which enabled him to enter into the difficulties of a younger generation with as much sympathy and understanding as into those of his own. But to-night we miss him especially as one of our most valued leaders in these conferences. He was scarcely ever absent from them until, in the last year or two, his health began to fail. He must, I think, have presided at our meetings more often than anyone else. And again and again he has given the opening address, and so paved the way for wise and fruitful discussions to follow.

The last occasion on which he gave the opening address was in 1923. The subjects for the conference that year were what are called practical ones, and Dr. Glazebrook spoke with satisfaction of the way in which the Church was turning from the pursuit of heretics to the consideration of schemes of social betterment. That did not mean, I need hardly say, that the future discussion of doctrinal subjects was less necessary than before. The more zealous the Churches become in regard to the practical application of Christian principles to the problems of social and national life, the more important is it that they should think clearly and deeply on the principles themselves. On the other hand, his reference to 'the pursuit of heretics' may remind us that the discussion of Christian principles can be, and should be, carried on without animosity or bitterness. The last few years have

brought an increase of theological controversy, and nowhere more markedly than in regard to the subject of Sacraments which we have assembled to consider during this week. Much that will be said at our meetings can hardly avoid being controversial. But controversy is not in itself an evil thing; our Lord Himself was a great controversialist; and our aim must be, not to avoid all occasions of controversy, but to conduct it, when we have to conduct it, in His spirit. What does that mean? It means that, along with the determination to say what we believe to be true, there must go a genuine sympathy with other points of view, a real attempt to understand and appreciate what others are aiming at and what values they seek to preserve, a resolve that we will be fair to them even before we are fair to ourselves, a strenuous refusal to impute unworthy motives, and a continual recollection of the wide extent of that common ground on which we are united in our devotion to the one Master.

We often say that the Holy Communion, originally intended to be the symbol of fellowship between Christians, is now a cause of separation and division. There is truth in the statement, of course; yet it may be seriously misleading, if we allow it to thrust out of our minds the fact that there exists a core of common experience which is shared by members of different Churches and of different schools of thought within the same Church. We cannot regard it as of no account that to Roman Catholic and Free Churchmen, to Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical and Liberal, the Eucharistic Service brings, by whatever means, the experience of intimate and vital communion with the living Lord. No doubt we differ when we seek to explain how this communion is effected or to state what its possibility involves. But however divisive our doctrinal theories may be, behind them all there lies the experience of fellowship with Christ; and it is, surely, because men dread any diminution in the rich content of that experience that they are so uncompromising in the assertion of what they conceive to be the true sacramental doctrine.

I do not forget that, apart from doctrinal differences, there are important differences also in regard to the experience itself, and to this matter I shall return later. Moreover, the sacramental experience has not in the estimation of all Christians the

same fundamental importance. To speak only of Anglican churchmen, the value which is set upon the Holy Communion is in all (or almost all) cases great, but it is not in all cases equally great. What, however, I am at the moment concerned to remember is the place which the Eucharist takes in the religious life of Anglo-Catholics. At their congress a year ago at Southampton one of the speakers said, 'No tongue could tell, no angel's pen could write all that the Lord's own Service has been during these (nineteen) centuries to the successive generations of Christian people. To the priest it has been his daily food, his strength, his solace, his inspiration. To the people it has been religion, devotion, the lifting-up of heart and mind to God—everything indeed that we mean by Christianity.' Whatever our own position may be, such a statement cannot leave us unmoved. It is a fact that to a great number of our fellow-Christians the Eucharist is the deepest, the central, moment in their religious experience. We should be blind indeed if we did not see that. And just because of this we can understand better how they will regard some things that will be said at this conference. They may not think of our proceedings as possessing even that small degree of importance which we honestly attach to them ourselves; they may be convinced that some of our statements are quite untrue; and yet those statements may give them pain none the less just because they have reference to so sacred and intimate a part of their life. We are not on that account to abstain from speaking out; we have a duty to ourselves as well as a duty to them; we believe that certain things are true, and need—greatly need—to be said at the present time; but we shall try to speak with love in our hearts, we shall remember that those who disagree with us are our fellow-disciples, and we ask them also to think of us as their fellow-disciples who are seeking, even as we know that they are seeking, to be faithful servants and good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

There is another matter to which I wish to refer briefly, for it has a bearing on the possibility of that mutual respect and understanding which we all so much desire. It is often laid to our charge that we are a hard-headed intellectualist body, and that we are strangers to evangelistic and missionary zeal. Even those who are not unsympathetic to our work in itself often fail

to realize that we are urged by what is sometimes called the 'passion for souls' quite as much as by the passion for truth. Again and again I have found that this comes as a novel idea even to those who are in fairly close touch with us, and that when once it is grasped it leads to a wholly different attitude of friendliness although actual agreement may still be out of the question. The fact is that evangelistic work is not all of the same kind, and a variety of methods is not without apostolic sanction. Among the vast multitudes who stand to-day outside the Churches, the winning—or winning back—of whom ought to be the Churches' care much more than the edification of the pious, there are, it seems to us, a large and growing number of men and women whose aloofness is due to their conviction that Christianity is pledged to an intellectual position which is mediaeval in its attitude to modern knowledge, men and women whose truly religious spirit it would be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to call in question, men and women whom God loves and whose service He needs as much as He loves and needs the African negro or the dweller in a South London slum. We yield to none in our admiration of the tireless and devoted work that is being carried on by thousands of men who have no liking for religious liberalism, both on the mission field and in the squalid parts of our own land. The heroic and saintly lives of such men, often lonely, always self-sacrificing, are beacon-fires of the love of God in the darkness that surrounds them. But what of those others to whom their methods make no appeal? Shall it be grudged that some of us have *their* needs always in our minds, and desire especially to see *them* brought within the Christian Church? That, I believe, is what most of us have continually before us as the task to which we have set our hands. And even those who do not believe that our diagnosis of the situation is correct may at least believe that we believe it, and may therefore see that to deny the existence of a real 'love of souls' as one of the motives of our work is as ungenerous as it would be for us to deny it in their case merely because we consider that some of their methods or theories are mistaken.

These remarks are not irrelevant to our discussion of the Sacraments this week. It is not merely as a matter of academic interest that we ask what is the bearing upon modern sacramental

theories of primitive ideas of sacrifice, or in what way they have been influenced by the practices and beliefs of the mystery religions; rather, in pursuing such inquiries we are convinced that we are dealing with questions which affect the willingness of many persons to take their part in the Eucharistic worship of the Church. And however true it may be that it is more important that a man should share in the Christian experience than that he should be able to theorize about it, that does not help the person who is hindered from participating by his conviction, even if it be a mistaken conviction, that the Church's teaching about the sacraments is superstitious and untrue.

I hope you do not think that I have spent too much time on these preliminary observations. Let me pass on now to other matters.

It is one of the characteristics which differentiate our thinking from that of people of earlier times, that whereas they would often concentrate their attention on the fact that some phenomenon was due to the action of God, we are much more concerned with the different stages of the process which by His will led up to it. We know that behind all the happenings of life, all the changes in the universe, there stands God as the author and sustainer of all—God in whom we live and move and have our being; and so it might be said that in the last resort there is no disagreement between us and those who preceded us. But the practical difference is great; they talked about the 'that,' we talk about the 'how'; and the difference is shown in regard to matters of religion as well as in regard to matters of history and natural science.

The Bible, and especially the Old Testament, will suggest to us many examples of this earlier fashion of speech. When the earthquake destroyed Korah, Dathan and Abiram, it was a case of Jehovah's 'making a new thing'—though earthquakes can hardly be said to have been unknown in the ancient world. When the wind brought to the wandering Hebrews the opportunity of a change of diet, it was Jehovah who 'brought quails.' When Abraham believed that he must sacrifice to the God of his fathers as precious a gift as his neighbours offered to their gods, it was Jehovah who said to him, 'Take now thy son.' When Herod Agrippa was suddenly struck down by a loathsome

disease, it was the angel of the Lord who smote him for his impiety. It is not difficult to understand that at the time when statements like these were made—a time, be it remembered, when the scientific description of natural processes was out of the question—they seemed to have more of the quality of reverence in them than alternative statements which would have left God out of account. But it is quite another matter when it is claimed for that kind of statement made in the present day that it is the more reverent one. There may be good reasons for using it on special occasions. There may be times, for instance, when it is deliberately desired to call attention to the dependence upon God of all human life. There may, too, be persons who are so absorbed in the contemplation of God Himself that the processes by which He works arouse by comparison little interest. But it is equally possible that such a method of speech may simply denote ignorance of modern knowledge; or, again, it may spring from fear of the encroachments of science upon religion—a fear which is the natural consequence of that attitude which considers that religion and science deal with different parts of our experience, instead of—what seems to me the truer view—different aspects of the same experience.

To speak of the fall of an apple as taking place in accordance with a universal law of gravitation is not less reverent than to say that it takes place because God wills it. To say that the moon consists of matter which was detached by some tidal disturbance from the earth, and that according to its position it reflects to us the light of the sun is not less reverent than to say with the writer of the first chapter of Genesis that God set it in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth. Yet it is a melancholy fact that the attempt to describe the method of the divine working has frequently been regarded as essentially an irreverent proceeding, as if it were an attempt to do without God altogether. Even when religious people have afterwards become accustomed to a change of this sort, and have recognized that their earlier fears were groundless, they seldom take to heart the lesson which their experience has taught them and exhibit a sturdier faith at the next opportunity. Is it too much to ask that our discussions may be spared this particular kind of criticism?

I do not know whether any of our speakers will deal with

this side of the subject. Nine years ago, when I first read a paper at a Churchmen's Union conference, I urged that the method by which a sacrament was 'effective' could best be understood by reference to the same psychological laws whose working we trace in the effect of other symbolic actions. At later conferences we have had papers developing the subject on the same lines. I do not propose to say anything further on that matter to-day; but I do want to urge that any attempt to include the operation of the sacraments under general laws should not be understood as implying any doubt as to the reality in them of the worshipper's communion with God in Christ, or any denial that they are valid and effective 'means of grace.'

It would not, however, be correct to suppose that the sacramental experience of all Christians was exactly alike, and that the difference between one school of thought and another had to do only with the ways in which they interpreted or described it. They differ also, as I have already noted in passing, in the details of the experience itself, and to this point I must now return. It raises questions of considerable importance, particularly in view of the stress which is laid nowadays on religious experience as the necessary starting-point in the formulation of doctrine.

Let us approach the matter by means of an illustration. In the case of two different observers who witness an eclipse of the sun, both perceive the gradual obscuring of the solar disc and the dwindling daylight. But the one may know that the eclipse is caused by the passage of the moon between the sun and the earth, and the other may believe that it is due to the voracity of a supernatural dog dwelling in the sky. Would it be true to say that the actual experience of these two observers was the same, and that they differed only in the way in which they explained it? Surely not. To say so would be to leave out of account all those emotional elements which play so large a part in our lives. The astronomer's attitude is one of intense interest, fascination, satisfaction; the savage's is one of surprise, consternation, dread. And it is to be noted further that in consequence of the existence of these emotional differences there is likely to be also a difference in regard to what objective facts are actually observed.

This illustration may help to bring out the point on which I wish now to insist, although I need hardly say that it is not my intention to imply that the intellectual equipment of the savage observer resembles that of an uninstructed Christian. The point is that the experience which two different persons may have of the same objective occurrence, and not only their account of it, may differ to a very important extent; and if this is so, as I cannot doubt that it is, as truly in religious as in other matters, then we are bound to ask, 'Whose is the experience that we must take as the starting-point for the purpose of constructing our theory?' We sometimes say that no religious theory, and in particular no sacramental theory, can be regarded as adequate which does not take account of, and do full justice to, all genuine Christian experience that is relevant; but is this true in the sense in which it is often understood? Is it necessary that a doctrine of the sacraments, before it can be considered satisfactory, should explain and justify the sacramental experience of every worshipper? Is it not possible, on the contrary, that the sacramental experience of some worshippers contains elements which are due to ignorance or superstition, which are no true guide to the understanding of the nature of sacraments and the means by which they are effective, and of which therefore quite definitely and deliberately account ought *not* to be taken? To return to my former illustration, it seems plain enough that we should not be justified in demanding that the scientific theory of solar eclipses put forward by an astronomer must, before it could be accepted as satisfactory, take account of the terror of the savage and of—what is quite possible—his conviction that he actually saw just beforehand in the sky the dog which was preparing to swallow the sun. The genuineness of the savage's experience is not disputed, and it may well form the matter of an investigation in some other connexion, but that investigation is not to be required of the astronomer as such, and it would not help to a judgment as to the correctness of the astronomical theory. And so also it seems that we are not entitled to speak as if all religious experience was of equal evidential value, or as if a sacramental theory could be pronounced inadequate merely because it left the sacramental experience of some Christian worshippers unexplained.

Are we, then, left without any foundation on which we can begin to build? Or must we try to discover some starting-point other than that which Christian experience provides? For myself, I cannot imagine any other starting-point which can be adopted with any hope of success. The idea of an infallible revelation conveyed supernaturally and claiming acceptance irrespective of its being confirmed and authenticated by human experience is no longer possible for most of us, whether it is conceived as transmitted through a book or through a church. We are therefore compelled, it seems to me, to take up the position that Christian doctrines, including the doctrine of sacraments, must be based upon some but not upon all Christian experience, and we have now to ask the question by what means we can discriminate between the religious experience which is evidentially valuable and that which is not.

I think that the answer to this question, the fundamental importance of which will not be denied by anyone who admits the need for asking it at all, must be obtained from the consideration of that effort, which in some measure we are all continually making, to attain to a point of view from which the manifold parts of our experience are seen to fit together so as to form a harmonious and unified system. Different people vary very much in the degree to which they are capable, or even desirous, of correlating the separate fragments of their experience into a coherent and intelligible whole; but it can hardly be denied that our capacity of judging correctly the value and significance of any single part is dependent upon the progress that we have made towards this ideal. The interpretation of life is in this respect very much like dealing with the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, and a person who has succeeded in putting only a few pieces together here and there is plainly less well qualified to express an opinion as to the significance and relative importance in the picture of a single piece, or of a small group of pieces, than one who has successfully constructed a large part of the picture and to whom in consequence its general character is revealed. It is true that the jig-saw puzzle of life is so immense and so complicated that nobody can hope to complete it; there will always be ragged edges and pieces that apparently refuse to fit in. It is true also that inequality of achievement may be due to causes for which

no one would for a moment think of blaming the individuals concerned. But it remains true, I am convinced, that the right of any man to claim consideration for his view as to the meaning of a single fragment must depend upon the degree to which he has been able to transform the initial disorder into harmony and coherence. And, still speaking in metaphor, there are few intellectual delights that can compare with the joy that one feels when a piece that has long proved refractory is suddenly and unexpectedly found to fit with a group of neighbours and falls exactly into place.

Now it is quite possible for us to have constructed a moderately self-consistent theory in regard to a selected group of facts which form the subject-matter of some particular study, as history or natural science or ethics or theology, and yet to find ourselves baffled when we are asked to show how our principles are related to other facts of which we are no less certain. But the interlocking of the various departments of study becomes more and more apparent, and it is increasingly difficult to hold them apart. We cannot, for example, be content with an ethical theory which should hold up for our admiration a course of conduct that could be proved to be economically disastrous, any more than we can be content with a body of economic doctrine which should dictate actions that would be ethically wrong. A theological doctrine which would compel us to deny the facts of science, and a scientific theory which would compel us to deny the facts of religion are equally unlikely to command our assent. And so also it is possible that a man's religious experience, as well as his interpretation of it, may take a particular form, and include particular elements, just because it is allowed to remain intellectually isolated from the rest of his life; but I suggest that where there is this lack of unification his religious experience has less evidential value, and that it ought not to be regarded as a decisive objection to any particular theory that it fails to explain experience of such a kind.

In the special case of the subject that is before us this week, I would say, then, that a doctrine of the sacraments is not necessarily to be considered an inadequate one because it leaves unexplained certain features of the actual sacramental experi-

ence of some Christian people. At the same time, it must be remembered that those features, if there are any, which we thus ignore are not the less in need of explanation because our doctrine of the sacraments does not itself account for them. Unless some other explanation can be found, our doctrine stands open to that very criticism which we have just now been considering, namely, that it does not fit into a rounded and comprehensive view of life. Hence we see the importance of the earlier papers in which we are to hear discussed primitive ideas about sacraments. It may prove to be the case that those elements in sacramental experience which we regard as not helping us towards a true theory are explicable as being due to the survival of primitive beliefs which served a useful purpose in the process of religious evolution but which are no longer of any religious value. Some of those early ideas, too, may have reached us associated with practices or it may be with interpretations which were elaborated in the pagan mystery cults. It is quite possible that the original ideas have now passed out of memory, and yet the practices to which they gave rise and the language which was employed in connexion with them may have persisted long after their early significance had been lost, for mankind is far more conservative in regard to both ritual and formula than in regard to actual belief. We continue to wear special clothes at funerals and in periods of mourning, though we have long ceased to believe that a corpse is taboo and that consequently if ordinary clothes are worn on such occasions they will afterwards be a source of danger to the rest of the community. We still talk about 'kind-hearted' people, though we no longer imagine that the heart is the seat of the affections.

Now the continued performance of actions, for example, extending the empty right hand when greeting an acquaintance, and the continued use of phrases, for example, the rising of the sun, which derive their significance from long-outworn habits of society or ideas about the universe are of course entirely harmless so long as we are ready to admit, when we are challenged, that they are no more than interesting survivals. But it happens sometimes that we are not content to admit this, but we try instead to justify them by far-fetched reasons which would never

have occurred to us unless the practices and the phrases had been there to start with. Thus it may easily occur that survivals from ancient belief or practice lead to our stating religious doctrines in a form which is out of keeping with modern ways of thought; and this is especially likely in the case of the sacraments.

It is probably well known to the majority of those who are present that the most primitive organisation of society was based on kinship. 'Among primitive peoples,' wrote Prof. Robertson Smith, 'there are no binding precepts of conduct except those that rest on' this principle.[1] The only possibility of security for the individual lay in each member of a clan holding inviolate the life of a fellow-clansman, and at the same time combining with his fellows to exact blood-revenge for every clansman who was killed by a member of a different clan. It was supposed that in the veins of every member of the clan there ran the same blood —the blood of a common ancestor, and this blood was the symbol of a common life. Everyone who did not share this blood was a potential enemy; and if a permanent alliance was to be made with an individual who was not originally a member of the clan, it could only be by establishing, in the most literal sense, this bond of blood. Thus at the present day, we are told, where the organization of society is still at this stage, it may be necessary for veins to be opened in the arms of both the stranger and a member of the clan, and their blood to be allowed to mingle; or it may even be that the blood is actually drunk by the contracting parties. And when the blood covenant has been made, the stranger has become the blood-brother not only of the individual with whom he made it but of the whole clan, for the blood which now flows in his veins is the same as theirs.

The young boy or girl is not, however, regarded as being a full member of the clan. For this purpose an initiation ceremony must be undergone at the attainment of manhood or womanhood, and this ceremony also involves some form of blood-immersion. Thus, inasmuch as 'the blood is the life,' the process of admission into what Mr. Andrew Lang has called 'the savage church' is regarded as an entry upon a new life, in other words as a new birth. And in some tribes this has been taken so literally that

[1] *Religion of the Semites*, 1907 edition, p. 287.

the youth has to pretend to forget everything that he did or was before.[2]

With these facts in our minds, let us consider the Christian sacrament of baptism. The importance of a special ceremony as the means by which a new member is admitted into the Christian Church is not in any way to be depreciated merely because initiation ceremonies existed alongside of the most primitive religious beliefs, or because in such ceremonies the symbolism of washing had already come to be widely used before the time of Christianity. The need for such a sacramental observance is plain; its value both to the Church and to society outside the Church needs no emphasizing; and its sacred and powerful effect upon the individual when it is consciously and deliberately accepted will be denied by no one who believes that the grace of God does not cease to be the grace of God because it operates along lines which psychology is beginning to make clearer to us. But what of the language that we use about it? Why do we talk about 'regeneration' or 'a new birth'? Is it not plain that such language ought either to be treated as metaphorical, or else to be frankly recognized as a survival from times when the initiation was quite literally conceived as admitting by means of blood-transfusion into a full share of the blood, that is, the life, of the clan? Yet both the metaphorical and the 'survival' interpretation are often disallowed, and the words taken as literally applicable to Christian baptism, though in a spiritual, not a material, sense. And then we have that condition of things to which I have already referred, in which reasons are sought for including in the Christian doctrine of baptism ideas which never would have been included if it had not been for the retention of these phrases—phrases which obviously have their explanation in a primitive state of society which we have left far behind. Of course, if there were independent and cogent reasons for seeing in baptism the occasion of a new birth in any other than a metaphorical sense, the fact that the language had its origin among such primitive conditions would in no wise invalidate it; but can we think for a moment that the idea would ever have found its way into the Christian doctrine as a result simply of Christian experience of the rite? To put it otherwise, have we not here

[2] Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*, pp. 103, 104.

an evident case of the traditional language producing the doctrine rather than of the doctrine being based upon experience and using only so much of the traditional language as was appropriate?

The importance of these considerations lies in the fact that it is the retention of language expressive of the idea of new birth which has produced a large part of baptismal controversy. Christian people are, for the most part, not likely to be divided on the need for a ceremony of admission to Church membership, nor are they likely at the present day to hesitate about admitting that such a ceremony (which in the case of infants must include the subsequent confirmation of their vow) is marvellously and graciously effective for the individual believer; but the use, in anything more than a metaphorical sense, of phrases like baptismal regeneration is just what suggests to the uninstructed person a mechanical theory of baptism, working *ex opere operato*, and makes it possible for the unbeliever to imagine that the Church holds her sacraments to have a magical efficacy. And inasmuch as we all, to whatever school of thought we belong, desire to get rid of such a misconception, is it not worth while to consider seriously how greatly it is strengthened by the retention of language implying a conception of society which among the civilized part of mankind has by now totally passed away?

I should like in this connexion to quote a sentence from Mr. L. Patterson's *Mithraism and Christianity* which puts very clearly the two sides of the matter. If it is important that the critics of Christianity should always remember the first half of the sentence, it is no less important that Christian apologists should always remember the second. 'The fact,' he writes,[3] 'that an idea is found in the heathen religions does not prove it to be false and worthless, nor, on the other hand, does the survival of a belief in Judaism and Christianity necessarily prove it to be of permanent value.'

As an illustration of the way in which a present-day speaker will occasionally use language recalling the most literal interpretation of the initiation ceremony as based upon the primitive idea of kinship—language which might be intelligible enough to a modern savage but which, it seems to me, must sound unreal

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. viii.

to the ordinary twentieth-century Englishman—I quote the following extracts from a recently-published address[4] on the subject 'What is a Christian?' 'A good Christian,' it was said, 'is a man who is a blood relation of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 'Union with Christ as man is accomplished by the Sacraments of the Church; . . . we become his brethren, his blood relations.' 'These Sacraments . . . make us blood relations of the Lord Jesus Christ.' And particularly this—'When we are baptized, we change our blood'—this is put forward as offering a contrast with the case of a certain German Jew who, though naturalized as an Englishman and then as an American, 'did not change his blood'—'When we are baptized, we change our blood, we become children of God, we are engrafted into the Body of Christ, we share his human nature, we are his blood relations.' When we remember that in primitive society blood-relationship was the most important fact of life, whereas to the modern man it often means very little and has certainly no prerogative as the ground of loyalty, must we not feel that to use such phrases is to hark back to a former point of view just where it is least likely to be helpful?

This paper has already run to a considerable length, and in the few minutes for which I ask you to bear with me longer I need refer to the Holy Communion only in so far as is necessary to indicate the bearing upon it of the argument which I have tried to follow this evening. That the Church's thought about the Eucharist has been influenced by Jewish conceptions of sacrifice is plain enough; but we must go further and say that to understand the latter it is necessary to go back to the idea of sacrifice as it existed in primitive times. It is less than forty years since this necessity began to be proclaimed in England by avowedly religious writers, and the name of Robertson Smith is the one which in this connexion comes at once to mind. But inasmuch as Robertson Smith was regarded by many of his contemporaries as seriously heretical, it may be worth pointing out that before the publication of his famous lectures (though not before their delivery) Bishop Westcott had urged the same necessity. *The Religion of the Semites* was published in November 1889, and

[4] *The Practice of the Christian Religion*, pp. 28-38.

its preface is dated October 1st of that year; but August 26th, five weeks earlier, is the date appended to the preface to the *Commentary* on the Epistle to the Hebrews. There, in a footnote to the note on 'The Prae-Christian Idea of Sacrifice,' Dr. Westcott had written, 'Those who have dealt with the Scriptural ordinances and teaching on Sacrifice have too commonly neglected ethnic institutions,' and this is followed by an appreciative reference to Tylor's *Primitive Culture*. So also, alongside of Robertson Smith's statement, 'Everyone who reads the Old Testament with attention is struck with the fact that the origin and *rationale* of sacrifice are nowhere fully explained,' we may set this bolder sentence of Westcott's, 'There is no reason to think that Sacrifice was instituted in obedience to a direct revelation.'

No general agreement exists among anthropologists as to the original significance of sacrifice, or indeed as to whether it had one single original significance from which all others were derived. Of these questions it is not necessary for me to speak, for we are to have papers on the subject to-morrow morning from Dr. Astley and Dr. Nairne. But it is impossible not to see in some of the language which is used in the Eucharistic service, and in the ideas which it expresses, the survival of notions about the means of effecting or renewing communion between the god and his worshippers which arose at a time when not only the nature of the deity but also the constitution of society were conceived in a primitive manner. It is true that the primitive origin of these ideas does not prove their worthlessness, but neither does the fact of their survival prove their permanent value. And it is our duty, it seems to me, to ask whether the continued employment of such language and such ideas really helps to the better understanding of the Holy Communion to-day. Is it not, as in the case of baptism, precisely around these ideas, and what seem to many of us to be unwarranted deductions from them, that controversy turns rather than around any interpretation which is content to base itself on Christian experience? Does not their use make it easier for us to exalt the importance of ceremonial righteousness at the expense of moral? Does it not often lead, with both priest and people, to a disproportionate attention to the outward circumstances of the rite

—an attention which it is difficult to believe that our Lord would have desired?

To ask such questions as these is not to deny that the institution of sacrifice has been in the past one of the means by which God has taught men to draw near to Himself, and to learn the joy of His fellowship. It is not to turn a hard, unsympathetic intellectualism upon the fundamental fact of the soul's thirst for God, or to doubt that the sacrament of the Holy Communion has been, and will continue to be, for untold millions of believers—whether learned or unlearned—a means by which they draw near to the living Christ and so find rest unto their souls. But it is to be ready to learn that the means which God uses to teach and uplift men may change as their ideas change, and to hold that it is faith—not unfaith—which tells us that 'God fulfils Himself in many ways.'

PRIMITIVE SACRAMENTALISM

By H. J. D. Astley, M.A., Litt.D., Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

THE subject of this paper is Sacramentalism as it exists in the present or existed in the past among races in a condition of primitive savagery or barbarism. This is necessary if we are to understand the place of sacraments in the cult and ritual of the Christian Church throughout her history.

When we cast our eyes back upon the beginnings of the Church as she is found immediately after the withdrawal of her Master, it appears that the Apostles commissioned by Him went forth preaching 'the Gospel of the Kingdom' and proclaiming as the condition of entry and membership two things: Baptism (followed by the Laying on of Hands—what is now called Confirmation) and the Breaking of the Bread. The first carried with it the promise of the remission of sins repented of and the gift of a new life, described as being 'in the Holy Ghost' or 'in Christ'; the second was proclaimed as the means whereby that new life was maintained through union with the now glorified Christ by partaking of His Body and Blood in the eating of the broken bread and the drinking of the wine shared by all.

Leaving on one side, for it will be discussed in subsequent papers, all further reference to the New Testament, I will introduce my subject by reminding you of a passage in Professor Lake's writings in which he expresses his view of the matured teaching of St. Paul with regard to Baptism; the same holds true with regard to the Eucharist (*Rom.* vi, and I *Cor.* x and xi).

Professor Lake tells us that 'Baptism is, for St. Paul and his readers, universally accepted as a "mystery" or sacrament which works *ex opere operato*, and from the unhesitating manner in which St. Paul uses the fact as a basis for argument, as if it were a point on which Christian opinion did not vary, it seems as though this sacramental teaching is central in the primitive Christianity to which the Roman Empire began to be converted.' So by the time of Ignatius Baptism could be spoken of as 'the Bath of Regeneration' (*cf. Titus* iii, 5), and the Eucharist as the 'Food of Immortality.' 'Thus,' Lake con-

tinues, 'the Catholic doctrine is more nearly primitive than the Protestant.' Nevertheless, he adds, 'the Catholic advocate in winning his case has proved still more; the type of doctrine which he defends is not only primitive but pre-Christian.'[1]

Professor Lake is perfectly right; we must dive deeper than the rites of Greek secret societies or of the mystery religions. These ideas, entirely on a line with primitive religion and derived from Animism, were in the air, and were most repugnant to the advanced Judaism of our Lord's day, but we may suppose that He took them and invested them with a high spiritual content.[2] Like all great teachers, He was far in advance of the apprehension of His followers, who soon debased His ideas to the level of their own material conceptions. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* The fully-developed system of Catholicism is a syncretism of Christianity not merely with the higher forms of paganism with which it came in contact in its early days, but with those elements of primitive religion which lie at the root of human nature, which are in us all however cultured we may be, and which still survive almost unchanged in the uncultured masses of mankind. To demonstrate this will be our endeavour in this paper—to show briefly from beliefs and customs still held and practised by those races that are not yet emerged from savagery or barbarism what is the common origin of all in that far distant past when primitive Man first looked out with curious eye upon the strange world in which he had to live and fight for his existence. Thus we have been led by sure steps to our proper subject, which is Primitive Sacramentalism.

One of the most fascinating studies that can engage the mind of a thinking man is that of 'Origins,' *i.e.* the endeavour to discover the beginnings and significance of customs, social and religious, in the midst and full efflorescence of which he finds himself placed; and in pursuing this study he will find himself inevitably carried further and further into the 'backward and abysm of time,' and will come in contact with those social and religious *couches* from which he has been accustomed

[1] Lake, *Earlier Epistles of St. Paul,* pp. 215, 233, 385. Professor Glover quotes these passages in his *Paul of Tarsus,* p. 162, and attempts to refute the argument, but without success.

[2] For we may at the least assume that the germ of actual teaching on the part of Jesus lies at the basis of St. John's meditations, *Jn.* iii and vi.

fondly to imagine himself to have been emancipated in the progress of the race from savagery and barbarism to culture and civilization ; and he will also find ideas connected with their origin still alive and actively vigorous among those who occupy the lower strata of the civilization of which only the veneer, and that of the thinnest, has touched them.

This fact has been more and more forcibly brought to the front by the science of Anthropology, including folk-lore, which investigates the thought and custom of primitive races in the far past and in our own day. Multitudes of explorers, observers and students have been and are engaged in this investigation, and it is well it is so, for, as Sir J. G. Frazer, one of the greatest of them, reminds us, the primitive races are fast dying out, or entering the bonds of a sudden process of civilization, and it will soon be too late to study them in their pristine simplicity,[3] and among ourselves the drabness of a universal system of elementary education is fast eliminating any remains of primitive thought and custom which still survive. But these do yet survive, and superstition, which after all is only survival, still rears its head among us, and often in the most unexpected quarters.

If what we have been saying is true of the origin of most social customs and of religious rites and ceremonies, it is true in a very special degree of those which are associated with the idea of sacraments. Here we come right up against the very fundamental thought of primitive man as he looks out upon the world in which he finds himself living. In a striking passage in *Middlemarch* George Eliot tells us that all Nature is sacramental; the sun setting in his glory, the sea in storm and calm, the verdant woods and the dancing streams, all Nature is but the radiant cloak of the Divine, or, as Pope puts it, 'Nature the body is, and God the soul.'

This is entirely on the lines of primitive thought, only, instead of 'God,' primitive man says 'spirits.' The deeper we penetrate the more true we shall find it that this principle runs

[3] Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy,* preface, vol. i, p. xv, and passim. *Cf.* Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria,* vol. i., preface by Sir Hugh Clifford : 'With the coming of new ideas, new ambitions and aspirations, and a new outlook upon life, it is almost incredible how short a time is needed for the obliteration of old-world customs and of ancient landmarks among primitive peoples.'

through all man's relations with Nature and with his fellows, *i.e.*, the interpenetration of the outward and the inward, of the material and the spiritual. We know that our senses do not reveal to us reality except through interpretation; our eyes behold a sunset, the poet sees 'worlds unrealised'; as Wordsworth said:

> 'My heart leaps up when I behold
> A rainbow in the sky.'

Our eyes see, our ears hear the written or spoken word: the mind interprets: words themselves are sacramental.

And primitive man is a poet essentially—without knowing it. He envisages Nature through Animism, *i.e.*, the idea of souls. Whatever else he is ignorant of, he knows that he is alive, and he is living in the midst not only of fellow human beings but of animals who share a similar life; trees and plants grow and pass through the changes of the seasons—they too are alive; further, the heavenly bodies rise and set and pass through other changes; the wind blows, now violently, now softly as a child's kiss; a rock falls on him and inflicts a blow. So, he argues, everything is alive, possessing a life that lies not in the thing itself, but in its soul or souls; for primitive man is conscious that he possesses more souls than one—three, or perhaps four—his waking soul, which leaves his body in sleep and wanders into the world of dreams; his bush soul, which will leave him at times to be interchanged with that of some denizen of the forest; his shadow soul, which pursues him as he walks facing the sun, and which if stepped upon inadvertently, or worse, designedly, by some crafty foe may work him deadly harm; and the soul which finally leaves his body at death and never returns. And if he possesses these various spiritual essences, why not those others too?

Finding himself thus in the midst of a world of living things and of forces some of which are friendly, others—and alas! the majority—the reverse, he would seek some means of controlling or bending them to his will. Hence arise Magic and Religion—Magic chiefly in the form that is called Sympathetic, because this is by far the most useful: Religion, springing from a sense of awe and wonder when magic fails, as in the end it does, and so he is led on to worship, in which he entreats instead of trying to command. But Magic survives, and magic and religion combined are of the essence of sacramentalism.

At first primitive man does not differentiate between the 'living thing' and that which makes it alive, *e.g.*, he worships the 'Tree-spirit' before he worships the 'Spirit in the Tree'; but the one soon follows the other, and hence arise all that we call Fetichism, Shamanism, Polytheism and Idolatry. In the case of the latter, the most unenlightened of savages will tell you that he does not worship the stock or stone or image itself, but the spirit that inhabits it.

Thus Magic may, and probably did, precede Religion in the order of time, and the origin of Religion may be found in man's discovery of the failure of Magic; but in practice we find the two going hand in hand in all ages and in every race that we are acquainted with.

Socially, the first aggregations of human beings would be, as in the case of the more intelligent of the lower animals, the horde, with the bravest and most virile of its members recognized as its chosen leaders; on this followed the association of several hordes, consisting of a number of families, in tribes and clans. Not all the members were deemed capable of exercising magical or religious functions, any more than all could be leaders, chiefs or kings — democracy is a system unknown to primitive man — and thus before long there arose the special classes of magicians and priests, or, as in the case of the Australian natives, the Wirreenun, or Wise Men, who combined the two offices; the witch doctors in Africa and elsewhere hold an analogous position.

These by their magic arts essayed to control, or by a system of sacrifices to propitiate, the spirits, and promote the welfare of the clan or tribe or individual. Sacrifice would appear in the first instance to have been of human victims, a custom which long endured; later on this was exchanged in many cases for animal or even vegetable offerings, and in its essence it was a gift offered to a higher power.

One of the principle functions of the magician was the infusing of power by means of incantations into certain people or objects. The objects might be pebbles or shells or sharks' teeth, or what not; thus a beneficial effect was bestowed on the wearer which rendered him immune to all hostile influences. This idea of power attached to persons or amulets is known as *Mana*

in the Pacific, as *Orenda* in North America and by various names in other parts of the world, and is of world-wide prevalence, coming down from the highest antiquity. Go to the Caves in the Dordogne, to the Grimaldi Caves near Mentone, or to Altamira, Cogul and others in Northern Spain; view the drawings executed on the walls of their dim recesses by the artists of the great Cro-Magnon race in Aurignacian times, and you will find not only representations of the bison and the mammoth, the cave-bear and the reindeer in profuse numbers, but also in many instances the man with the javelin in his hand ready to throw, or the spear piercing the heart of the beast; while in his burials you will find him lying surrounded by teeth and shells, and his body smeared with red ochre, the colour of the life fluid now no longer running in his veins. There is a good example of an Aurignacian burial in Britain in the one discovered many years ago in the Paviland Cave in the Gower Peninsula in South Wales.[4]

Now all the foregoing is sympathetic magic, and it is in its essence sacramental. By the drawings the artist expressed his desire: May crowds of bison, etc., come my way, and may my javelin or spear, touched by magic art, succeed in piercing them to the heart, that my necessities in food and clothing may be provided for; and in his burial he took care that his spirit should not go unprotected to the world of spirits, nor unprovided with the necessary 'ichor' for his life in that unknown and mysterious sphere. The same ideas, unchanged in their essential expression, though differing in different localities are universally prevalent among the primitive races to-day. Further, we must not forget that in primitive thought the drawing or the image is itself actually the thing it portrays; metaphysical distinctions are unknown, and to say it is a 'representation' would convey no meaning.[5]

[4] Obermaier, *Der Mensch der Vorzeit,* pp. 236-258; Elliot Smith, *The Evolution of the Dragon*, pp. 147 *ff.*; *Journal* of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol. xliii, pp. 325-374; Astley, *Primitive Art and Magic,* 'Hibbert Journal,' vol. xviii, pp. 544-556.

[5] So the priest who 'represents' a god at some service or festival is himself, for the time being, actually the god whom he represents; and the same holds good of the victim. Among totemists the totem of any man is regarded as identical with himself. Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia,* p. 202*ff.*

If then we are to discover the true implication of the place occupied by sacraments in the Christian religion it can only be accomplished by tracing out the ideas which lay at the root of the psychology of the peoples among whom Christianity first spread, and this can only be carried through, as in our own case to-day, by piercing the crust of superimposed ideas due to all manner of sources derived from the evolution of culture, down to those ideas, the most powerful of all, derived from the common heritage of mankind in its first primitive outlook on the world. These, as we have said, are summed up in the word Animism. Primitive religion is animistic and animism implies sacraments.

We have been taking the idea in its widest connotation; we will now investigate what Animism has to show us in regard to the two rites recognised by our own Church as Sacraments. The definition, as we all know, is that a Sacrament is 'the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given, ordained by Christ,' and accordingly the sacraments are confined to the two: Baptism and the Eucharist. The Church of Rome, retaining here as elsewhere more of primitive thought, includes five other rites, Confirmation, which is really a part of, and the completion of Baptism, Penance, Matrimony, Orders and Extreme Unction. In respect of Matrimony she has the sanction of St. Paul himself who speaks of it as 'a great mystery,' *μεγὰ μυστήριον*, the Greek word equivalent to sacrament. But leaving these on one side let us take the two sacraments of universal obligation in the Christian Church, *i.e.*, Baptism, including Confirmation, and the Eucharist; each of these is represented among primitive races, and if we are to enter into their full meaning it can only be by a sympathetic study of their fundamental conceptions as we find them in varying stages of progress from savagery and barbarism at the present time. In all these races we find one or other or both sets of ceremonies corresponding more or less with these sacraments, *i.e.*, we find Rites of Initiation and of Fellowship or Communion, and the meaning attached to these rites is practically the same everywhere, *viz.*, a new birth, and the sacramental meal which consists not merely in the common partaking of food by the god and his worshipper, but in the actual partaking of the god by the worshipper, *i.e.*,

the offering of which the worshipper partakes is itself the god.

One of the concomicants of the animistic stage of religion was the institution of Totemism as the basis of social arrangements. From many indefeasible indications it has been concluded that Totemism prevailed everywhere among the early races of mankind and that it was a necessary stage, so to say, in man's advance; there are undoubted traces of it in the Egyptian religion and among the Semites; it has left its mark clearly on the Old Testament; it may be perceived in the folklore and *märchen* of the civilized races to-day; and though Sir J. G. Frazer doubts if it was universal[6] many competent authorities are of that opinion. At the present time, however, Totemism is defunct except among certain tribes of North American Indians, where it is individual, and among the Australian natives and Melanesia, where it is tribal; and in certain parts of Africa it still exists though in a moribund condition.

Into the origin of Totemism I must not attempt to enter here; I have discussed it sufficiently elsewhere; but with Sir J. G. Frazer I would say that while Totemism is not itself a religion it is on the way to becoming so,[7] and is a necessary and as it were inevitable outcome of animism. For it implies a natural kinship between man and certain objects which are on the way to becoming gods.

Some few illustrations, drawn from various sources, must suffice to show the bearing of what has just been said upon our subject and what we mean by Primitive Sacramentalism. Time would fail did we attempt to adduce examples of adumbrations of Sacramentalism in primitive folklore.

We take our first illustration from the lowest race of men now existing, the Natives of Central Australia, but in studying them we have to remember that even they are not really primitive, but the product of long ages of isolation during which they have made advance in some respects and have degenerated in others. It is impossible to find among existing races any that are actually primitive in the true sense; we have to take them

[6] Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. i, p. xiv.

[7] Frazer, *Op. cit.*, i, 115; ii, 18*ff.*; iii, 118; iv, 4, 5, 27*ff.*, 101*ff*

as we find them, and argue backwards to the past by a combination and elimination of the various surviving elements.

Now these Australians are Totemists, and while the consequent social organization varies in different tribes, those which in some respects appear to be the most backward are totemically the most advanced. For example, that one of the Australian tribes in which Totemism is most fully developed, the Arunta, believe that every individual is a re-incarnation of an ancestor who lived in the Alcheringa times, *i.e.*, times beyond which no living memory goes. These Alcheringa ancestors, when they departed, deposited a stick or stone known as a *churinga*, which was the abode of their spirit part; the local totem centre where a number of these spirits is congregated awaiting re-incarnation is known as the *Oknanikilla* and the particular tree or post or stone where a spirit enters a woman to be reborn is called a *churinga nanja*; should a woman pass the spot she will conceive unless she pretends to be old, and the child born belongs to the totem of that place irrespective of the particular totem of the mother or putative father. This is a special phase of Arunta totemism, but it is important in view of what follows.

The churinga are collected and deposited in sacred and secret storehouses called *Ertnatulunga*, usually caves in some secret recess of the hills. (The word churinga means something sacred and secret.) These Ertnatulunga are known only to the initiated, and no woman is allowed to enter or even go near them. The rites of initiation are very complicated, and in some respects disgusting, and include circumcision. They are performed on boys as they arrive at puberty, and the final act is the entry into the secret cave, and the exhibition of the sacred churinga, those belonging to each several totem being tied up in bundles, reminding us of Abigail's statement to David: 'the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with Yahweh thy God; and the souls of thine enemies them shall he fling out' (I. Sam. xxv, 29).

The boys are now fully initiated members of the tribal group, and having passed through the grave and gate of death (symbolically) have been born again, and enter on a new life. The initiation ceremony is a true sacrament of new birth. It is not a lustration, a Baptism, for in the arid plains of Central

Australia there is no water, but it is a sacrament, the initiation of the youth arrived at puberty into the duties of manhood, and as such is equivalent to, or corresponds with, Confirmation.[8]

Among the Yabim in New Guinea the rite of initiation includes circumcision, and a double lustration or bath in the sea, and is regarded as a process of death and resurrection; the candidate is supposed to die and to be born again. A similar ceremony of the new birth is or was performed among the Akikuyu of East Africa at the rite of circumcision with the same intent. (*Cf.* St. Paul in Rom. vi.)[9]

The ceremony of initiation among the Fijians was most elaborate, and too long to be described, but it included these two ideas of death and resurrection, and this is the interesting point: it was followed by a sacramental meal of food and water of which all the initiated partook; then the high priest or one of the elders addressed the young men warning them solemnly against the sacrilege of divulging to the profane any of the high mysteries they had seen and heard, and threatening all such traitors with the vengeance of the gods.

Sir J. G. Frazer points out that there is an important difference between the drama of death and resurrection in New Guinea and Fiji, for whereas in the former it is the novices who die and come to life again, in the latter the drama is enacted by initiated men who represent the ancestors, while the novices merely look on with horror and amazement at the awe-inspiring spectacle. 'Of the two forms of ritual,' he says, 'the New Guinea one is probably truer to the original purpose of the rite, which seems to have been to enable the novices to put off the old, or rather the young, man and to put on a higher form of existence by participating in the marvellous powers and privileges of the mighty dead' (shall we say, the glorified Christ?)[10]

Coming to races higher in the scale (these are only scattered illustrations) among the pagan natives of the Upper Niger the

[8] Spencer and Gillen, *Op. cit.*, chapters vii to ix and throughout; *Cf.* Sp. and G., *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 177, 283, 327 *ff*; Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, 88, 509 *ff.*; Mrs. Langloh Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe*, pp. 70 *ff.* Frazer, *Op. Cit.*, i, pp. 36 *ff.*, iv, 180, 217, 227 *ff.*

[9] Frazer, *Belief in Immortality among the Aborigines of Australia*, vol. i, p. 254.

[10] Frazer: *Op. cit.*, vol. i, 429, 434.

rite of initiation includes both circumcision and lustration; *e.g.*, there is a preliminary period of training lasting from a few days to a month (Confirmation Lectures). During this period the boys are instructed by the old men in the lore of the tribe. They are taught to be obedient and respectful. Corporal punishment is frequently administered. They may adopt for themselves new names such as Hippopotamus or Lion—symbols of their re-birth; these names, however, are dropped at the conclusion of the rites. During the whole period of initiation the presence of the Dodo or tutelary genius is felt: the boys see him at a distance and learn to fear him. The boys are now ready for circumcision. Among some tribes, not all, on the morning of circumcision the boys go through a baptismal ceremony by immersion in a stream. This custom clearly brings out the idea of the change of nature which is commonly associated with initiation ceremonies, and which is further shown by the feigned loss of their former personality when the boys return to the village. It is a true sacrament.[11]

Returning to Central Australia and its system of totemism, we find that contrary to the usual custom associated with the system each totem group was permitted at one time to eat freely of its own totem, with the idea of multiplying the species. This was done at the Intichiuma ceremony. It was in no sense with any notion of 'eating the god,' for the totem is not a god, and indeed the Arunta are a tribe who have no use for a god or gods at all; accordingly the phrase 'a totem sacrament' employed by Robertson Smith has now been dropped.[12] And yet this ceremony o

[11] Meek, *Northern Tribes of Nigeria*, vol. ii, pp. 86 *ff.*

[12] 'Totem Sacrament.' Since writing the paragraph in the text I have read Dr. Bronislaw Malinowski's article in *Science, Religion and Reality*, 1926, on Magic, Science and Religion, a truly helpful, informing and careful study, and up-to-date inasmuch as he refers to all the most recent literature on the subject, as well as to his own researches in Melanesia.

In this Essay I find that Dr. Malinowski still uses the term 'Totem, or Totemic, Sacrament' to describe the quasi-sacred meal of the Central Australian tribes, and as I have hinted he is perfectly justified in doing so. The whole Essay should be studied, and particularly in this connection pp. 43-46. It is an admirable investigation of the psychology of the primitive mind; one thing to be specially noticed is that this writer associates Totemism more closely with religion than the present writer has been inclined to do; in fact, he makes totemism a sort of half-way house between religion and the social arrangements of primitive society, and of course at the base lies magic, which is the science of primitive man. F

eating was 'sacramental' in so far as it was a sacred, *i.e.*, quasi-religious performance intended to establish the relationship between the totem and its human representative. More recently the custom has been for the members of one totem group to eat the totem of another to increase the stock, *e.g.*, the kangaroo people would only eat the emu, the plum-tree the witchetty grub, and *vice versa*, a most interesting example of primitive altruism, as Sir J. G. Frazer remarks![13]

We come now to enquire into the origin and meaning of cannibalism, almost universally practised among primitive peoples.

Why did the Fijian warrior kill and eat his captured foe? He would tell you that it was in order that he might become a partaker of the qualities that had marked the victim. By virtue of the Mana which he possessed he would acquire all the courage and prowess and other valuable qualities in which the deceased had excelled, and thus become a mightier warrior than before. This would be true as to whatever qualities the deceased might have possessed, and whether male or female, old or young. The idea is inherent in the practice of cannibalism, however loathsome it may appear to us, and where the victim was the representative of a god, as in Mexico and in many parts of Africa and elsewhere, to partake of the victim, whether human, or later on, animal, where progress in culture had led to the substitution, was to partake of the flesh and blood of the god himself. Sacrifice is become sacrament. This holds good still further when the offering of the fruits of the earth has been substituted for the immolation of a victim, and thus the way is prepared for the

he writes: 'Totemism in its most elementary forms, as found in Central Australia, is a system of magical co-operation, a number of practical cults, each with its own social basis, but all having one common end—the supply of the tribe with abundance. The existence of totemic clans and their correlation with cult and belief is but an instance of departmental magic and of the tendency to inheritance of magical ritual by one family.'

And further: 'From the survival point of view, it is vital that man's interests in the practically indispensable species should never abate, that his belief in his capacity to control them should give him strength and endurance. Totemism appears thus as a blessing *bestowed by religion* on primitive man's efforts in dealing with his useful surroundings, upon his 'struggle for existence.' Thus we find a moral value and a biological significance in totemism.' (The italics are mine.)

[13] Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 206 *ff.*

'Unbloody Sacrifice' and sacramental communion of the Christian Church. Ideas as old as man, and still endowed with a living power among savages, are sublimated to the uses of the world's highest religion; while superstition, the surviving relics of these ideas of the antique world, still endows the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist with the actual Body and Blood of the Crucified, Risen and Glorified Christ.

As Sir J. G. Frazer remarks after a full discussion of the subject:

> 'It is now easy to understand why a savage should desire to partake of the flesh of an animal or man whom he regards as divine. By eating the body of the god he shares in the god's attributes and powers. And when the god is a corn-god, the corn is his proper body; when he is a vine-god the juice of the grape is his blood; and so by eating the bread and drinking the wine the worshipper partakes of the real body and blood of his god. Thus the drinking of wine in the rites of a vine-god like Dionysos is not an act of revelry, it is a solemn sacrament.'

We may pause here for a moment to note that, in common with many competent authorities, I do not hold that because the corn, for example, represented Ceres, or the vine represented Dionysos, in the primitive sense of the word 'represent,' therefore there was nothing behind the Corn and the Vine. Frazer, like Miss Harrison and others, appears at times obsessed by his theory. We hold, on the other hand, that behind the Corn and the Vine there lie real human beings who have become gods, as behind the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist there is the historical Jesus. Frazer himself admits this in the case of Osiris. But to proceed:

> 'A time comes when reasonable men find it hard to understand how anyone in his senses can suppose that by eating bread or drinking wine he consumes the body and blood of a deity. "When we call corn Ceres and wine Bacchus," says Cicero, "we use a common figure of speech, but do we imagine that anyone is so insane as to believe that the thing he feeds upon is a god?" In writing thus the Roman philosopher little foresaw that in Rome itself, and in the countries which have derived their creed from her, the belief which he here stigmatizes as insane was destined to persist for thousands of years as a cardinal doctrine of religion among peoples who pride themselves on their religious enlightenment by comparison with the blind superstitions of pagan antiquity' (or those of the primitive peoples of to-day). 'So little can even the greatest minds of one generation foresee the devious track which the religious faith of mankind will pursue in after ages.'

So far Sir J. G. Frazer, and we in this Conference cannot but agree that there is only too much truth in his words! [14]

When Baptism is held to produce a spiritual change *ex opere operato*, and the elements in the Eucharist are supposed to be 'transubstantiated' at the word of a so-called 'priest,' we enter at once on the field of magic; and when Reservation is practised, not for the sick—that is a mere blind—but for adoration and worship, we are landed in what is nothing less than fetishism and idolatry, although I yield to no one in my recognition of the deep religious feeling of those who practise it. The increasing prevalence of these beliefs and practices to-day is, however, a further serious indication of that recrudescence or revival of superstition in our age, which is so marked in other directions also.

This is the kind of religion which is being introduced into our English Church once more, with all its accompaniments of superstition and sacerdotalism and the consequent turning of the Christian ministry into a priestly caste, not far removed from and but little above the magicians, witch doctors, wirreenun and priests of primitive man! Such is the circle in which ideas seem doomed to revolve!

How true the words:

> 'As giant oaks from tiny acorns grow,
> From small beginnings mighty issues flow.' [15]

[14] Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Third Ed., part v. Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild, vol. ii, p. 167 *ff.*

[15] See *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 10. Article, Sacraments; Pfleiderer, *Primitive Christianity*, vol. iv, 231-239; vol. i, 289, 370, 408; *Contentio Veritatis*, The Sacraments, by W. R. Inge, pp. 271-311. The whole article is worthy of study, and embodies the present writer's convictions. He has written entirely independently in this paper. For a moderate statement of the modern Anglo-Catholic view, see two articles on 'The Origin of Sacraments' and 'The Eucharist' in *Essays Catholic and Critical*, S.P.C.K., 1926.

SEMITIC SACRAMENTAL RITES

By the Rev. Canon ALEXANDER NAIRNE, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge.

WHO are the Semites? Hebrews, Syrians, Arabs. Syrians include Tyre and the Phoenicians, Edom and Moab. But Babylon and Assyria cannot be reckoned pure Semitic. From Syria and the Arabs we have little ancient evidence. The traditional and still persistent custom of the Arabian nomads and the Old Testament writings make up nearly all our authority for Semitic sacramental rites. Babylonian and Assyrian illustration is indeed valuable, for though the Babylonian origins be Sumerian, and though Sumerian be not Semitic, still inherited influences go to the making of every national whole; and, on the other hand, wherever the desert passes into the city the austere Semitic strain is modified. *Leviticus* is far from primitive simplicity. Of pure Semitic sacramental rites we know, in the strict sense, very little. We depend on inference. Not merely because it would be tedious do I refrain from rehearsing to-day the quasi-canonical list of Semitic rites. That would be unprofitable unless I were able to add one or two of my own collecting. It would also, I fancy, be misleading.

What I propose is to start from three points in the Old Testament; to follow certain lines which spring from these and wind in and out among Semitic pieties and crimes; and so to educe, if I can, a few general principles in the Semitic service of God. Let these starting-points be (1) the Passover, (2) *Leviticus*, (3) some Psalms, especially xviii, civ, and li.

(1) The Passover, as we know it, was a memorial feast in Israel, a memorial of redemption, a confession of a pure faith, a holy rite. To the Christian Church it has become holier still, for it is our Easter festival. But what was it in its origin? An introit of the medieval Church, not for Easter but for Christmas, taken from a passage in the *Wisdom of Solomon* in which the first Passover is described, startles us by its vividly exact prediction of the mystery of the Incarnation:

> 'When quiet silence held all things and night was hastening to its mid career, thy all-powerful Word leaped from heaven and heaven's royal thrones, a champion entering earth.'[1]

[1] *Wisdom*, 18.

But the context is truncated for the purpose of the introit. *Wisdom* continues thus:

> 'A fierce warrior bearing a sharp sword by thy express decree, he stood up and filled the world with death.'

What did indeed happen that night? Hear Sir James Frazer's answer:

> 'The one thing that looms clear through the haze of this weird tradition is the memory of a great massacre of first-born. This was the origin, we are told, both of the sanctity of the first-born and of the feast of the Passover. But why should the Israelites kill the first-lings of their cattle because God once killed those of the Egyptians? And why should every Hebrew father have to pay God a ransom for his first-born child because God once slew all the first-born children of the Egyptians? The tradition becomes intelligible when we assume that in the original version of the story it was the Hebrew firstborn that were slain; that, in fact, the slaughter of the firstborn children was formerly, what the slaughter of the firstborn cattle always continued to be, not an isolated butchery but a regular custom which, with the growth of more humane sentiments, was afterwards softened into the vicarious sacrifice of a lamb and the payment of a ransom for each child. The Passover was the occasion when the awful sacrifice was offered; and the tradition of its origin has preserved in its main outlines a vivid memory of the horror of these fearful nights. They must have been like the nights called Evil on the west coast of Africa, when the people kept indoors because the executioners were going about the streets and the heads of human victims were falling in the king's palace. But seen in the lurid light of superstition or of legend they were no common mortals, no vulgar executioners who did the dreadful work at the first Passover. The Angel of Death was abroad that night; into every house he entered, and a sound of lamentation followed him as he came forth with his dripping sword. The blood that bespattered the lintel and door-posts would at first be the blood of the first-born child of the house; and when the blood of a lamb was afterwards substituted, we may suppose that it was intended not so much to appease as to cheat the ghastly visitant. Seeing the red drops in the doorway, he would say to himself: "That is the blood of their child. I need not turn in there. I have many yet to slay before the morning breaks grey in the east." And he would pass on in haste. And the trembling parents, as they clasped their little one to their breast, might fancy that they heard his footfalls growing fainter and fainter down the street.' [2]

What a train of recollections this rouses. Abraham and Isaac: the King of Moab saving his city by slaying his eldest son on the wall in view of the besieging army: the passing of children through the fire to Moloch: Rizpah watching the gallows when David hanged her sons: those little skeletons in jars at Gezer.

But Sir James Frazer has altered the story. Had he no

[2] *The Dying God*, p. 174 *ff.*

right? Does not all analogy suggest that it had varied in the previous tellings?

> 'Ritual is conservative and persists unaltered, but myth is fluid. Only where myth becomes stereotyped as dogma does it become rigid.' [3]

From the making of the Jewish Bible till the nineteenth century this myth has been rigid : it was not so before. Unless we allow these reasonable guesses we must confess mere ignorance of Semitic sacramental rites.

But accepting, how strange and grim and wrong we find it all. 'Slaughter, butchery, awful sacrifice; to cheat the ghastly visitant; the trembling parents' : is this a sacramental rite? With what relief we turn to the candor of the prophet :

> 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for all the sin of my soul? He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' [4]

Is the sacrament more conspicuous in the plain morals of the Prophet, or in the humanized rite of the Law, or in the cruel origin?

But come back to the origin. We have seen Frazer remoulding the legend. Let us, too, try our hand upon it. Put aside all the slaying of children and horrors of blood. Keep to those verses which tell of the hasty evening meal, the lamb and the unleavened bread. Then dream of the initiation to the nomad life, the tribe eating the scant fare of the desert before God, who will be with them as they wander under the far-stretching sky, God's only temple. This is history. The Beni Yisrael did come from the desert, whether or no they had been in Egypt. This is experience. Such meals the nomads really used to consecrate; the clan feeding on their flock, once in a way, solemnly, with God. Pilgrims and guests of God. How innocent, unmiraculous, penetrant of nature's inner meaning which is the spiritual world. We muse of the Gospel according to St. John, wherein no rehearsal is made of the tragic paschal institution at

[3] *Cambridge Ancient History* ii, p. 608.
[4] *Micah*, vi, 6-8.

the Last Supper, and the discourse of chapter vi is ambiguous with veiled rebuke, and the Eucharistic piety of the Church flows vision-like from the risen Saviour sharing the poor man's meal of bread and fish with his Galilean disciples by their native lake in the dawn of the world-wide Gospel.

(2) If any part of the Old Testament may seem obsolete, surely *Leviticus* is. No, not to those who have any taste for Biblical scholarship, who care about the conception and birth of books, about the waxing and waning of language and its gradually accurate aiming at the mark, about the deepening and hardening and the degeneration and the complication of ideas as they struggle to emerge into freedom. Like varieties of bramble to a botanist, so the species in the hedges of *Leviticus*, once noticed, are unmistakable to an observant reader, and criticism of dates and sources is an index to the humanity of this document of the Hebrew renascence; a humanity which remains after all surprisingly archaic and which anyhow has beauty. There are vestiges of antique crudity, but also transmutations of these into theology, as *e.g.* of the taboo against eating blood, in one place just declared and left, in another the very sacramental rationale of sacrifice is deduced from it. There is the Eye for eye, and over against it the Love your neighbour as yourself, and the Count the stranger in your midst to be your neighbour. There is forgiveness and gentle ways with the weak and poor and oppressed. There are rites in which the sufferings of animals and utterly wasteful killing of them are ordained, and over against that there is an almost sentimental consideration for their helplessness. Jahveh is Israel's national God, but with a far wider range of mystery added, and his dwelling in the midst of his redeemed people is a sacramental rite of profound influence. Ezekiel's cancelling of the old theology, The sins of the fathers . . . by When the wicked man . . . is here embodied and applied. Divine law dominates in bringing the ideals, the failures, of the old prophets to effect: the Law of Moses is the Spirit of God attending to the several souls of men. And now at last custom becomes law, tribal prejudice is improved into general justice. And as a broadly sanctioned law the custom of adopting the *Ger* or Stranger opens the way to the evangelizing of the nations.

Whence comes all this? It is the nomadic desert giving and taking of the civilization of the town: perhaps it is Babylon bringing Sumerian moderation to the fervid Semite.

Then there are the propitiatory sacrifices; and what a vista of endless questioning these open. Do we see in them the winning of grace in return for gift, or the necessity of penalty or satisfaction? Is there an effect by means of substitution, and if so, is this evidence of high or low morality, of a gracious revelation or a pathetic mistake about the divine nature? Is this substitution preparatory for the unique truth of Christianity, or has it blinded men to the purity and simplicity which is in Christ Jesus? Do we detect in these sacrifices that 'most fatal of aberrations in the development of ancient religion, the introduction of ideas of property into the relation between men and their gods,'[5] or is that deep but melancholy contrition which Babylon inherited from Sumer the far nobler impulse at the heart of the Levitical worshipper? Do piacular sacrifices first appear when Assyrian tyranny was cowing the world and dissipating the primitive joy of worship—'In thee, thee only, have I trusted'—or are these anxieties the primal stuff of which the soul of man was made? The choice is difficult. This at any rate is plain, that forgiveness or cleansing the stain rather than breaking the chain of sin is in these rites. And is not that a sacramental quality and very characteristic of *Leviticus?*

Yet on the other hand the system is too artificial. The rules of priesthood are devices rather than sacraments, and sometimes draw the wandering mind of the reader to analogies of magic and away from those pictures and proclamations in which the present deity is unforgettable; where we read and cannot but adore: Jacob at Bethel, Joshua and the Captain of the Lord's host. Or think of Moses at the Bush, and then of those regulations which we connect with the 'day of atonement,' but which are really the precautions Aaron and his two surviving sons were to take before entering the sanctuary, lest they should suffer the same strange fate as Nadab and Abihu, who died what we might style a ritual death.

Of course *Leviticus* itself indicates the connexion. That is one of its many humanizings of superstitious antiquity. But

[5] Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites.*

may we use this late completed *Leviticus* as evidence for Semitic rites? Judaic is not Semitic. Robertson Smith says that the only system of Semitic sacrifice of which we possess a full account is that of the second temple at Jerusalem. Too true. For the rest, we depend on allusions, objects discovered by excavation, analogies from modern practice: from all of which we infer and assume but do not know. And as for the second temple, read the three pages in *Adonis* where Sir James Frazer vivifies in summarizing the whole story of Old Testament criticism: Assyrian terror; prophetic inspiration; the two reforms; the puritan censor; the resultant Bible. Thus we realise the veil that is drawn between the sacred books of the Jewish Church and that ancient world which we seem to know less and less as now here, now there, some fossil from it is presented to our sight and touch, compelling us to distinguish fact from fancy. And, waiving all this, consider once more the elaborate system in *Leviticus*. Can this be sacramental? *Natura quoniam constant neque facta manu sunt Unius ad certam formam primordia rerum.* But these rites are *manu facta*, the device of men. As Amos, Jeremiah and S. Stephen said, God never ordained laws like these. There is more and better in *Leviticus* than these sacrificial ordinances. A fresh breeze of sacramental piety blows through those chapters which have been named The Law of Holiness. But as a whole *Leviticus* is religious rather than sacramental.

(3) What is this distinction between religion and sacrament? In *Psalm* xviii David describes a theophany, God manifest in the tempest. God himself is not visible, but he shows his glory. He abides in the central pavilion of cloud, dwelling in the thick darkness. But he rides on the winds, the cherubim. Before him flash the lightnings, the seraphim. From the cloud come the voices, the thunder. We remember Jahveh shewing Moses his glory in the mountain as he passed, shewing and hiding. We think of the psalm of the sevenfold Voice of Jahveh; of *Psalm* civ with 'his angels winds, his ministers the flaming fire'; of the Law given at Sinai in the storm by the mediation of angels; of Elijah at Carmel; of Elijah passing from Elisha in the fiery storm; of Pentecost and the rushing wind and tongues of fire and the mighty Spirit descending on

the Apostles. Nearly all the miracles, in the New Testament as in the Old, are tempests, thunderstorms. Or we think of the psalms of the New Song: all the trees of the forest rejoicing . . . for he cometh, he cometh to judge the world . . . reigning from the tree. This is the advent of spring, as Psalm civ. is the large sacrament of the whole of nature—his temple wherein every thing saith Glory—the opulent sacrament in which Job renewed communion with God, and in which the 'Comfort ye' prophecy told Israel of going home.

For here surely is the right sacramental idea. The natural tempest is taken just as it appears; as it is given, not made fancied or arranged by man. This is the manifestation of God, made by himself, with no strained fictions and substitutions, but through that existent living and orderly nature which is the creative aspect of himself. In beholding this, in being involved in this, the worshipper is brought into the presence of God.

The psalm is not itself the sacramental rite but the record of it, the rubric of the liturgy, a document of evidence to the historian. But the tempest is in fact the rite. To the Hebrew it did not just wake emotion, as reading the psalm might. He believed that God was in very deed manifesting himself thus. And we to-day are not shut up to a cool study of his belief from without. If for Jahveh we put all that science and philosophy have gathered into the formula, God nature and conscience, we may believe as naïvely as the Hebrew did. 'God makes his angels winds of fire': 'It is the angels,' said the nomads in *Arabia Deserta* as they stood in the door of their tents and watched the lightnings on the opposite side of the valley; and Charles Doughty, hearing them, 'mused of the night when Issa ben Miriam was born.' But Tennyson sang how the heart stood up in the ruin of faith, and answered like a man in wrath, 'I have felt'; and then went on:

> 'No——like a child in doubt and fear:
> But that blind clamour made me wise;
> Then was I as a child that cries,
> But, crying, knows his father near;
>
> And what I am beheld again
> What is, and no man understands;
> And out of darkness came the hands
> That reach thro' nature, moulding men.'

And in prose we call the angels forces of nature, or seek more subtly accurate terms in this our latest stage of observation, and Dr. Whitehead and his peers astonish us by interpretation like fresh inspiration, probing mystery, and still insisting that they deal with no mind-made fancy, but with a whole that is given, a sacramental rite.

The Golden Bough opens with a description of Nemi and Aricia. It is important, says Sir James Frazer, to picture the scene 'accurately: for a subtle link subsisted between the natural beauty of the spot and the dark crimes which under the mask of religion were often perpetrated there.'

'Picture, accurate, natural beauty, subtle link': the passage is infused with Frazer's instinct for Sacrament. Nor must his stress on the abuse of Sacrament, so often, so very often, the scandal of history, be overlooked. But these 'crimes' were perpetrated 'under the mask of religion.' Turn to p. 222 and hear him define religion as 'a propitiation or conciliation of superhuman powers which are believed to control nature and man.' Objection is raised against this as an unworthy definition, as though it stopped there. Listen to the rest:

> 'Thus defined, religion consists of two elements, a theoretical and a practical—namely, a belief in powers higher than man and an attempt to propitiate or please them. Of the two, belief clearly comes first, since we must believe in the existence of a divine being before we can attempt to please him. But unless the belief leads to a corresponding practice, it is not a religion, but merely a theology; in the language of St. James, "faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone." In other words, no man is religious who does not govern his conduct in some measure by the fear or love of God. On the other hand, mere practice, divested of all religious belief, is also not religion. Two men may behave in exactly the same way, and yet one of them may be religious and the other not. If the one acts from the love or fear of God, he is religious; if the other acts from the love or fear of man, he is moral or immoral, according as his behaviour comports or conflicts with the general good. Hence belief and practice, or, in theological language, faith and works, are equally essential to religion, which cannot exist without both of them. But it is not necessary that religious practice should always take the form of a ritual; that is, it need not consist in the offering of sacrifice, the recitation of prayers and other outward ceremonies. Its aim is to please the deity, and if the deity is one who delights in charity and mercy and purity more than in oblations of blood, the chanting of hymns and the fumes of incense, his worshippers will best please him, not by prostrating themselves before him, by intoning his praises, and by filling his temples with costly gifts, but by being pure and merciful and charitable towards men, for in so doing they will imitate, so far as human infirmity

allows, the perfection of the divine nature. It was this ethical side of religion which the Hebrew prophets, inspired with a noble ideal of God's goodness and holiness, were never weary of inculcating. And at a later time much of the force by which Christianity conquered the world was drawn from the same high conception of God's moral nature and the duty laid on men of conforming themselves to it.'

No modest person would find that unworthy. But it does indicate a distinction between sacrament and religion, a twofold distinction.

(*a*) Sacrament is rooted in nature, in life as life is actually experienced; and sacrament manifests God as the universal power and heart of life, of whose reality there can be no doubt even though he be not called God. But it is always possible to think of God in religion as 'believed' only. In David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan God is not named, there is no religious language. What a contrast to the 'Psalter or Psalms of David." So we say when we read critically. Plain men who fear God do not seem to feel it; and I own that from the theological point of view I do not feel it. Psalm xviii presents the world of nature as fulfilled in God, and the Lament presents the heart of man as fulfilled in God. Both are documents of a sacramental rite. And this is a presentation of God which in the nature of things cannot be gainsayed. But sometimes God is presented in a far more precise manner, and, whether or no we approve, we understand the gentle satire of Sir James Frazer:

> 'But, though he knew it not, these glorious and awful beings were merely, like the spectre of the Brocken, the reflections of his own diminutive personality exaggerated into gigantic proportions by distance and by the mists and clouds upon which they were cast. Man, in fact, created gods in his own likeness.' [6]

But God in the first chapter of *Genesis* is not like that, but firm and sacramental, and none dare ask about His person or His name.

(*b*) Religion would always get or do something: offer, propitiate, win, keep, rescue, escape. In religion a rite should be effectual, prayer answered, the course of events controlled. But sacrament effects nothing except to shew God, bring near, remove the imaginary barrier: 'And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom; but Abraham stood

[6] *The Dying God*, p. 2.

yet before the Lord': 'He saith unto them, It is I, be not afraid. Then they willingly received him into the ship; and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.'

Gudea was a very ancient Sumerian king of Lagath. His seal witnesses to a genuinely sacramental rite, 'the old processional scene which depicts the owner of the seal led into the presence of a god by his own personal god or goddess.' He has left a vase, too, of which it is written that 'if the engraved figures of the warlike Entemena had suggested the vigour of a race in aggressive movement and the splendid force of youth, the bas-relief of Gudea's vase may be said to reflect the passing of materialism and quest of power, and the triumph of mysticism and ritual.' He had a peaceful reign, maintaining order by spirit rather than by force. And he is quoted here to illustrate the sacramental relation between faith and works. Sacrament is not action, but it sets man free for all those actions which are man's own untransferable duty.

Under a mask of religion man does try to transfer his human duties, leaving them to God. Herein is idolatry. The idol is the commonest form of degenerate sacrament, so common that Semitic sacramental rites might seem at first sight to be the story of idols, pillars, and such other adjuncts of worship as we, like the prophets, call superstitions. The mere conceiving of God as one Spirit among other spirits is a kind of polytheism. The abuse of the term 'personal' is a petrifying of sacrament. So the high places, the sacred tree or cave, and then the rock-cut temple in which a particular god or the Baal of the spot was supposed to dwell, in contrast to the vague profundity of the forest which Dr. Warde Fowler describes as the earliest impulse of Italian religion.[7] The truth of sacrament is protected by its vague margin. Emphasize the margin, and sacrament becomes a rite. Compare what Charles Lamb said about Shakespeare's dramas and the loss they suffer by being acted:

> 'Natural indeed, grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of reach of most of us; hence the reign of that symbol of emotion which passes current in the theatre for it.'

Look at *Exodus* iii, 'The Bush.' Read the Jahveh passages,

[7] *The Religious Consciousness of the Roman People*, in a few pages near the beginning of which that sense of *Numen* is outlined which Dr. Otto has discussed.

then the Elohim. Here is imagination and religion over against sacrament and science; here is Jahvistic rhetoric overwhelming what Whichcote calls 'things' and says 'are greater than us,' and puts them in line with God.

Certainly Jahveh is very glorious in the Old Testament, and the Jahvist historians write in a style which is the top of art. But Jahveh in the Old Testament is not what Jahveh was to the thoughtless Israelite: the very form of the name may perhaps be an audacity of academic reverence. Notice how Jahveh is bettered in the progress of Elijah, who was led from vengeance on the prophets of Baal to the still small voice. Compare Jahveh of the 'Comfort ye' prophecy with Jahveh of Judges. All that is best in Elohim is gradually absorbed into Jahveh in the Bible of the Jewish Church, as the Johannine Word is absorbed into the national synoptic Christ by the Christian Church. And less immediately attractive though the Elohist writers may often appear, think of Joseph making himself known to his brethren, and compare that heart-touching narrative with the heroical handling of the earlier chapters. It is like Psalm li. after David and Nathan in *Samuel*; the sacrament of the deep heart of man in comparison with the conscience of a child.

And this leads far. Sacrament too wholly bound to visible nature is most liable to lose its felicity and to breed superstition: so trees, mountains, and then the high places with their abominations. But Psalm li. is a sacrament of mind. Here the psalm itself is more than a record; the penitence and its expression coalesce, the recitation is a sacramental rite. Not the bodily images, broken heart, blood-guilt, are its sacramental essence, but its potency of natural affection, of shame and yearning, and its intensifying of these affections till they reach beyond the ordinary, till they reach to God as though to a person. Compare the affection which springs and grows in the gospel narrative of *S. John*, binding the Lord and his disciples together, and intensifying into union of them all within the Godhead, in the Father.

Such sacrament of mind is also seen in our office or rite of the Visitation of the Sick. In truly sacramental wise this office takes not recovery from sickness as effect proposed. That may be left in the hand of God if the 'perpetual peace and safety'

of communion be assured. Should this illustration seem to carry us too far from Semitic sacramental rites, let me point out how exactly it corresponds to the plan and temper of the book of *Job*. In our office directions are given for the proper exercise of human prudence in affairs, and full sympathy is expressed with desire for relief of pain and for prolonged life. But these are not the aim of petition. The sickness itself is penetrated beyond the physical into the thoughtful, and hence to its harmony with the divine completeness of all things working together for good, and with the perfect unity of God in whom this 'all' becomes the bond of charity and an assurance of fatherly righteousness. This kind of sacrament appears in Babylonian rituals of prayer and may perhaps be traced to the grave Sumerians. 'The aim of prayer and ritual, so far as they concern the individual, is to keep the body a holy habitation for the personal God of each man. This seems the fundamental principle of Sumerian and Babylonian religion.' But then comes the strange barbaric confusion of added fantasy and artificial symbol: 'Hence the seals with monsters which make war against man and strive to evict his protecting God.'[8]

That Semites entertained these gloomy fantasies, and that they bred fear and through fear cruelty, and led the Semites into horrid ritual, is plain from Babylonian documents and from allusions in the Old Testament. But so it was in all the races of the ancient world. The argument of this paper is that the native virtue of Semitic faith and cult was freedom from such elaboration. And the source of this freedom is to be found in the sacramental character of the Semitic mind; for sacrament is natural, simple, vague, grand, and seeks nothing but communion with God. This is almost to repeat Robertson Smith's argument in *The Religion of the Semites*, although perhaps the general judgment would be to-day that Robertson Smith pressed the argument too far. He tried to show that in the earliest time sacrifices were rites of communion, not of gifts, tribute, or satisfaction for sin. And he explained the later propitiatory sacrifices as being still rites of communion at bottom. Well, it may be that he was wrong about the course of development, that sacrifices of communion were not always the earliest origin of

[8] *Cambridge Ancient History*, i, p. 384.

sacrifice. And in the propitiatory sacrifices other ideas than communion probably do dominate. And in the Levitical sacrifices of the second temple it is perhaps easiest to subsume the variety under the one heading of gift. So far the objection may be pretty certainly upheld. But does that touch the real purport of the book? What Robertson Smith stood for was that sacrament (not sacrifice) was the essential and peculiar idea of Semitic piety, and that this was so because the cradle of the Semites was the Arabian desert. The Semitic mind was the nomad mind, and nomad life, its scenes and hardships and relationships, moulded, as it still moulds, the mind to sacramental feeling.

That, speaking broadly, the desert was the cradle of the Semites is, I believe, what most would still say who have a right to speak. That the desert does breed such sacramental habit as I have imperfectly described will be admitted, I believe, by those who have lived among the nomad Arabs to-day, and will seem probable to those who, not having so lived, have read the Old Testament and Doughty's *Arabia Deserta* again and again. There is much difference between those books, and there is much difference between the Israelites of the Old Testament and the Arab nomads now. But the likeness is more remarkable than the difference, and the two-fold paradox of this likeness is remarkable. On the one hand there are a multitude of detailed scruples and habits, petty superstitious or sometimes genuinely pious: on the other hand, these do not display the character that impresses, lasts, is native and unique. That character speaks thus: Camels and tents, not corn wine and oil, is the wealth of man; the pastoral state is his nobility: we are pilgrims and sojourners on earth, God's guests; and when we die we go to Him, and that is enough: God is not flesh but spirit, and man too is spirit, God and man are kin, communion with God is life. The whole earth and sky is God's temple, He dwells not in temples made with hands: Pure language is the ornament of race, the word is the symbol of man's mind and God's; no pictured symbol comes so near, but silence goes further still. Ceremonies should be few grand simple and sincere: hospitality and mercy are the character of God, and the chief sacramental rites are hospitable and generous.

Turn to the Old Testament. Read about the patriarchs. Read of David Nathan and Solomon, and Solomon's apology for the innovation of the temple; hear the slogan of revolt from Rehoboam, 'To your tents, O Israel.' Notice the scruples about introducing monarchy, Ezekiel's gladness to be done with it. On the other hand, consider the primitive vagueness and the very late determination of the priesthood. Think of the sons of Rechab; of Jeremiah and the prophets, their scorn for sacrifices, the simplicity of worship and the confession of one deity to which they claimed to be bringing Israel back as in days of old: 'Hear, O Israel, Jahveh thy God, Jahveh one': that is not monotheism; it is the instinct of a primitive race for the real God who alone can be sacramentally adored. Go through and through the Old Testament with such notions as these in mind. Consider whether the evidence for these as the principles of faith in Israel be not clear, while the vestiges of strange inventions are dim, ambiguous and unimpressive. Go back from the Old Testament to *Arabia Deserta* or to the actual desert, and consider whether this faith hath not indeed sprung from the desert, and whether or no Semitic sacramental rites are not few, simple and truly sacramental in a kind which is quite another kind from what Hellas or Egypt or Rome could understand—*uacuam sedem et inania arcana*—a spacious mystery, a presence not displayed.

THE PAGAN MYSTERIES

By Professor Percy Gardner, D.Litt., F.B.A.

THE subject on which I have to speak, though very impor ant from the point of view of religion, is one of peculia difficulty, a difficulty which arises primarily from the insufficie quantity and the unsatisfactory quality of our authorities. It not a mere question of taking trouble and thoroughly investiga ing the information which has come down to us on the subject the whole of it is unfitted for grasping or analyzing: it is fluid as water and as unstable as a cloud.

There is a deeply cutting distinction to be observed betwee the actual Greek Mysteries and the philosophic and met physical theories connected with them, which admirably suite the mental habits of the Alexandrians, and which writers of th second and third centuries of our era develop in great clouds verbiage. Learned writers have usually not kept these thing apart. Some German writers have tried to discover in th writings of speculative Alexandrians elaborate systems theosophy, especially in what are called the Hermetic writing The recent learned editor of these so-called scriptures, M Walter Scott, pronounces the *Corpus Hermeticum* to be only bundle of Greek-Egyptian philosophic writings, inconsiste one with another, and of most nebulous character. In any cas I do not propose to deal with the Hermetic writings; my brai is not capable of following them. I shall speak only of th Mysteries as ways of belief and life which appealed to the peopl of the great cities of Asia and Egypt in the interval between th decay of the Hellenic pantheon and the rise of Christianit Their adherents were not philosophers, but ordinary men an women, puzzled by life and seeking some spiritual aid in the voyage through it and in their passage to the world beyond.

The Mysteries arose, so far as we are able to judge, i dependently in various districts on the shores of the Aegea Afterwards, in the time of the Roman Empire, they tended t wards fusion. But originally they seem to have sprung up o of a common ground of human feeling and a common sense

the divine in life, out of the accepted faiths of various countries. Those countries were not Greece and Italy. The clear, hard-cut minds of the Greeks were not suited to the vague emotions of mysticism. The original religion of the people of Italy was extremely practical and common-sense, and consisted rather in keeping up certain national or tribal customs than in keeping men in touch with the spiritual basis of life. Both in Greece and Rome religion belonged rather to the tribe and the clan, whereas the Mysteries appealed to individuals as spiritual entities.

Before the conquests of Alexander the Great, which tended greatly to bring together East and West, the religion of the Homeric Olympus was dominant, at all events among the ruling classes, in the various states of Greece. It was closely connected with the independence of the states of Greece, in which Zeus and Apollo, Hermes and Poseidon, and the rest were looked upon as divine patrons of the communities. Every city had splendid temples, series of brilliant festivals, families in whom priesthood was hereditary. Nothing tended so much to the preservation and the influence of the religion of Olympus as the firm hold which it acquired and maintained over art. In every market place and at every turn there stood figures of the gods, whose types had been formed by great artists, of a beauty which made them attractive to an art-loving people. The vessels used in daily life, the signets which the people wore, the coins which they carried to the market, all bore figures of the gods or representations of events in their intercourse with mankind. Sicily and the south of Italy were mere extensions of Greece, as were in a measure the coasts of Asia Minor. The enormous series of coins of Greece and Asia, which extend from the seventh century B.C. to the third century A.D., almost all bear as types the heads or symbols of the Gods of Olympus. This proves that, at all events in public and official life, the worship of those gods went on uninterruptedly. The same is proved by the early history of Christianity.

But the Olympic religion, as early as the fourth century B.C., seemed to be smitten with decay. The city states were being merged in larger units, society was undermined by the decay of social morality and the scepticism of the philosophers, and a void was forming in the religion of the civilized world. Only

firmly-seated faiths like those of Persia and Judaea could hold their own. A great invasion from the East came in to destroy and to renew. It arose chiefly in four districts on the borders of the Greek world. From Thrace came Orphism, the religion of Dionysus. From Phrygia came the worship of Sabazius and the Great Mother Cybele. From Egypt came the worship of Isis and her new consort Serapis, who had taken the place of the earlier Osiris. From Persia, though this was at a somewhat later date, came the faith of Mithras. The influence of these faiths and the results of their intercrossings profoundly affected the religion of the eastern Mediterranean and facilitated the spread of Christianity.

Although these streams of religion had separate sources and were never entirely fused, yet it is almost impossible, with our scanty information, to compare with one another. Certain marked features they certainly had in common. But before I go on to state what these common features were, it will be best to bring before you a little of the evidence in regard to them which is most clear and definite.

The passage in ancient literature which gives us the most vivid and instructive account of the Mysteries is to be found in the eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, a writer of mixed race who lived in the second century of our era. The whole work is of rhetorical and fanciful character; but the pictures which it gives of the life of the time are priceless.

Lucius, the hero of the tale, had been by sorcery transformed into an ass. After many adventures and many sufferings, he lay down to sleep on the sea shore at Corinth. Wakened by bright moonlight, he invokes the aid of the goddess of the moon to restore him to human shape. He is uncertain how to address her, whether as Ceres deity of Eleusis, or as the heavenly Venus of Cyprus, or as Diana of Ephesus, or as Proserpina: but he begs her, whichever name she preferred, to come to his help. Then he slept again, and soon had a heavenly vision, which rose from the waves. It was a female form, with long tresses surmounted by a wreath of flowers, and bearing on her forehead a disc flanked by serpents, the ancient Egyptian head-dress of Isis. She wore a robe of many colours, and over it a mantle, black in hue, on which shone numberless stars. She carried in

her hands the sistrum or sacred rattle, and a small pitcher. In all respects she was like the statues of Isis which have come down to us, but transfigured with light and splendour. She addressed Lucius as follows:

> 'I come to thee moved by thy prayers, Nature, mother of all things, mistress of all elements, first-born of the ages, highest of the gods, queen of the shades, first of the dwellers above, mirror of the gods and goddesses.'

She goes on to say that men adore her in many fashions and by many names. In Phrygia they call her the deity of Pessinus and mother of the Gods (Cybele); at Athens, Cecropian Minerva; in Cyprus, the Paphian Venus; in Crete, Dictynna; in Sicily, the Stygian Proserpina. But she loves best the name of Isis, by which the people of Egypt and Ethiopia call upon her. She bids Lucius dry his tears, for by her providence the day of salvation has come to him. She tells him that the dawning day is one specially devoted to her cultus. A great procession of her votaries will come, in the midst of which will be her chief priest carrying a wreath of roses. If Lucius, in his animal form, draws near and eats these roses, he will recover his human form. Then she rises to a higher strain:

> 'Remember and retain in your heart that the remainder of your life on earth is dedicated to me. To me, by whose favour you return to human form, you owe your existence. In my keeping you will live happy and honoured; and when, having fulfilled the allotted space of life, you shall go to the shades below, there also, in that underworld you will see me shining amid the darkness and ruling in the Stygian abode; and when you dwell in the Elysian fields, you will often adore me as your protectress.'

By the continual providence of the Goddess all turns out as she has foretold: on eating the roses Lucius returns to human form. The priest congratulates him on reaching, after so many misfortunes, a haven where Fortune, in the person of Isis, welcomes him, and bids him, clad in white robes and with joyous mien, to walk in the sacred procession.

> 'But,' he adds, 'that your course may be safer and better guarded, enrol yourself in our sacred host, and dedicate yourself to the service of our religion, taking on yourself the yoke of our ministry. For when you enter the service of the Goddess, then you will more fully feel the fruit of your liberty.'

The bystanders are naturally jubilant at the miracle, and declare that Lucius must have lived a life of innocence and good faith to be thus rewarded.

All this, however, was but the first step of the convert. Lucius at once began to frequent incessantly the temple of Isis and to prostrate himself before her image:

> 'Often,' he says, 'I approached the chief priest and begged him with earnest entreaty to initiate me in the secrets of the solemn night. But he, a dignified man, noted for his close observance of the sober rites, kindly and gently, as parents temper the impatient desires of their children, would check my eagerness with the solace of a good hope, and calm my mind. He said that it was for the Goddess herself to indicate the day on which each votary should be initiated, and who should be the initiating priest; and for her to name the fees required for the ceremony.'

Everything proceeded slowly and in order, only the mention of the fees disturbs the dignity of the process. The doors of salvation and of the world below were in the hands of the Goddess, and she alone could open or shut them. Meantime the votary had to live a life of complete chastity and temperance.

The Goddess did not keep Lucius long in suspense, but by a vision of the night warned him of the appointed day. The description which he gives of the ceremony of initiation is very guarded:

> 'You may anxiously enquire, careful reader, what was then done, and what said. I would say if I might; you should hear if it were lawful. But a like curse would fall on ears and eyes from such rash curiosity. Yet I will not hold in suspense you perhaps eager with religious desire. Listen then and believe, for it is the truth. I came to the bounds of death; after treading the floor of Proserpina, I came back through all regions. At midnight I saw the sun blazing with brightness; I came to the presence of the gods of the world below and of the world above, and adored them face to face. Lo! I have told you, but though you hear these things you cannot understand them.'

Lucius mentions without reserve the vestments he wore on the occasion, since, as he says, these may be mentioned without guilt. He wore twelve gorgeous habits. In his right hand was a burning torch, on his head a crown of palms; and he stood on a basis before the deity, exposed to the admiration of the throng. He ends with a hymn to the Goddess, in which he speaks of her as perpetual preserver of the human race, a mother to the unfortunate, loosing the snares of fate, stilling the tempests of Fortune, stemming the influence of evil stars. But after a time he had to undergo a further initiation in the mysteries of Osiris, the ancient consort of the Goddess. We may discount the state-

ments of Apuleius. Like all writers of the time, Pagan and Christian alike, he was under the dominion of Hellenistic rhetoric, and thinks too much of words, of literary style, of balance and antithesis : but I think that everyone who reads him with an impartial mind will see that he is speaking of real things, and those things some of the profoundest feelings of the human heart, the sense of mystery and of pollution, man's need of a saviour and an intense desire for salvation.

I have thought it best thus to approach the Mysteries of Isis from within. It is the experiences and the feelings of the votaries of any religion which are its soul; the specific doctrines and ceremonies are but the shell which encloses it. It is the personal relations of the votary to the Deity and the revelations with which she favours him which are the source of his enthusiasm and the guide of his life. Yet one sees that these revelations had in them little that is distinctive. Isis, though she preferred to be called Isis and owns Egypt as her native land, says that whether she be addressed as Isis or as Cybele or as Aphrodite she is willing to listen. Above and beyond all these names she is personified Nature, Nature in female form, as the origin of the world and the power ever working in the world; and the patroness and protectress of all who call upon her and commit their ways to her keeping.

However, as we are specially interested in the Mysteries in their relation to early Christianity, we must next turn to the aspects which they presented to the outer world. A great succession of learned writers have investigated this matter since the publication of Lobeck's *Aglaophamus*, the classical authority on the subject. Those who love bold theorizing are attracted by Reitzenstein, Loisy and Dieterich; those who desire a collection of the relative facts will turn to F. Cumont, Sir J. Frazer and Dr. Farnell. We have in English two satisfactory books on the Pagan Mysteries, that of Dr. Kennedy, published in 1913, and the more recent work of Dr. Angus.

The most obvious facts in regard to them are three. First, there is the care with which they guarded their secrets from profane eyes. Second, there is the very important fact that whereas the religious cults, at least in Greek lands, had all been social, had belonged to states and cities, and so were closely related to

politics, the mystic cults appealed rather to individuals, to human beings one by one. They admitted women and slaves as members, and encouraged them to break away from the bonds of family and city and to find among their co-religionists fresh social ties. Third, they were not jealous one of another. This is a trait especially difficult for a modern mind to grasp, for with us usually religion is absolute and exclusive. If we are Christians we cannot also be Mohammedans, or even, *pace* Dr. Cheyne, votaries of the Persian Bab. But a follower of Isis had not, as we have seen, any quarrel with a follower of Cybele or Dictynna : he thought his own way the best, but was very tolerant of those who preferred another name for his goddess, or even of those whose religion took a more masculine form, like the votaries of Sabazius.

Although the Pagan Mysteries appealed primarily to individuals, yet the individual inspiration took, as religious beliefs always do, an outward form. They did so primarily in three directions. There were accepted in them certain semi-historical tales, sacred legends in which the deities figured. These belonged mainly to the common people. Those who were more highly educated went beyond mere legend to theories of the universe, more especially of the nature of the world and of the life beyond death. And all the Mysteries had visible features, rites of initiation and of communion. Some of them had sacred books, which were guarded by a set of priests who practised asceticism, and who were the authorities to whom appeal must be made and offerings of money brought. The last of these features especially brought on them the hostility and contempt of the philosophers.

I shall not dwell long on the sacred legends accepted and repeated among the mystae of various sects. Undue prominence has been given to these in the past because the Christian Fathers found in them tales which challenged attack by their unreason or their obscenity. The cult to which were attached the noblest legends was that of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis in Attica. The nearness of Athens to its seat caused it to be caught up into the circle of Athenian religion. The story is told in one of the hymns attributed to Homer, and it was illustrated by Attic artists in marble reliefs and in vase-paintings.

Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, who is the most Greek of the personifications of mother Earth or Nature, was gathering spring flowers when the earth opened and Hades, god of the world below, issued forth and carried her away to be his partner in his realm. Demeter, the mother, failing to find her, in her anger restrained the powers of nature; and the human race would have perished had not supreme Zeus interfered. He procured an arrangement by which Persephone rejoined her mother in the summer but spent the winter in the world of shades. The story is touching, and it was adorned by the Greek genius with all the flowers of poetry and imagination. But in the actual festival of Eleusis, especially in the Hellenistic age, we find the traits and the rites which belonged to other Mysteries; the difference between it and them was that it embellished and transformed the old nature worship while they were nearer to their barbarous origins. To this point I must return later. Very different in character from the Persephone myth were the stories told in other lands of the sufferings of the deities of the Mysteries. According to the Orphic legend, Dionysus, who was, like Persephone, the deity of the fresh vegetation in spring, was seized when a child by lawless Titans and torn to pieces: but his heart was rescued by Athena and carried to Zeus, who in his anger destroyed the Titans with lightning, and the Cretans ordained, to mitigate his wrath, a tri-yearly celebration in which the sufferings of Dionysus were reproduced in mimic show. A not dissimilar myth was repeated in the worship of Isis. Her husband Osiris was slain by his brother Typhon, and his scattered limbs thrown into the Nile. Isis began a weary search for the body of her husband, and in the end found most of it.

Again in the Phrygian Mysteries we find the myth of a deity who is slain and comes to life again. Atys, the priest and favourite of the great Cybele, the nature goddess of Asia Minor, was mutilated or slain by his own hand; and the joy of the goddess at his restoration to life inspired her votaries to rejoice with her. The Greeks adopted the cult, only substituting the names of Aphrodite and Adonis for those of Cybele and Attis. In the *Adoniazusae* of Theocritus we have an exquisitely fresh and lively account of the festival of Adonis as celebrated in Alexandria, the Greek capital of Egypt. But here there is little

about mysteries; the festival is one of joy at the revival of vegetation in the Spring, of pomps and shows; a light-hearted carnival of a pleasure-loving people.

In recent archaeological works, and especially those of my learned colleague Sir James Frazer, there is a great collection of popular myths regarding Sarapis and Isis, Cybele and Attis, and the rest. It is shown that the main feature of them all is the death of the god and his revival, and the incorporation in religious drama and mystery of sympathy with the death and the re-birth. The anthropologists regard the whole circle of myths as springing out of the human sympathy for nature in her annual decay in autumn and her resurrection in spring, a sympathy which no doubt goes very deep in human nature, down to the sub-conscious and primary impulses of our being. Even those who are most thickly encased in the artificial ways of civilization must feel some deep inner stirring in the days of spring, and some sadness in gazing on the fields of autumn and the fading foliage of the trees. But there are other elements in the nature religions: the daily rising and setting of the sun excites in a lesser degree the same feelings as the spring and the fall of the year; and the waxing and waning of the moon is also to those who live in the country both an important practical fact and a source of emotion. Hence there is much sun and moon worship mixed in with the festivals of the seasons. Attis, Adonis, Osiris are in some respects solar deities; Isis is, as we have already seen, the moon-goddess, and we may so consider Cybele and Aphrodite.

I think that Frazer has gone too far in his assimilation of the pagan mystery myths to the Christian drama of redemption. The Jewish religion in its full development stood proudly apart from all heathen myths. And Christianity is in its main features a continuation of Judaism. There is no real parallel to be traced between the vague and fleeting forms of pagan myth and the historic story of the Christian redemption. Few of us succeed in fully grasping the character of the nature-myth. Myth was not supposed to be history; and the canons of historic research have no relation to it at all. It is a direct but very evanescent embodiment of impulse and feeling. The pagans would accept any number of inconsistent myths without at all

troubling themselves as to their inconsistency. The attempt of rationalizers, like Apollodorus and Euhemerus, to bring together into a consistent whole the myths relating to various deities is quite futile and hopeless.

So regarding them, the Christian writers could easily point out their grotesqueness and obscenity. I should not like to say that they were a sort of efflorescence growing out of the actual rites and ceremonies of the cult; but I should venture to say that alike the myths and the ceremonies grew out of impulses and tendencies deeply rooted in the hearts of men.

To revert to the Lucius of Apuleius. He is converted not because he believes the stories told by the priests of Isis to be true, but because he has seen in a vision Isis herself, and it is in obedience to her commands that he presents himself at the festival in her honour. And when, by following her directions, he is restored to the human shape, he submits to the commands of her priests and takes part in the rites established in her honour. His faith is based not on any intellectual process nor any demonstration, but on direct religious experience, though that experience may be perverted.

However, I must pass on to speak of the rites and customs of the Mysteries. A level-headed theologian would hardly think that the pagan myths had any influence on early Christianity: but it is more specious to think that pagan rites of the Mysteries did have such an influence, an influence growing stronger in the second and third centuries of our era. I think it beyond doubt that the pagan Mysteries did in their organization and rites show some similarity to those of Christianity; though what is proved by such similarity is a further and a difficult question.

The key-note of the teaching and the practice of the Mysteries is furnished by the word *soteria*, salvation. It is a word which may be used, obviously, in many senses. A man may long to be saved from his enemies, from evil fate, from poverty and oppression. Or he may, at the other end of the scale, long to be saved from evil passions, crime, his own worse self. It is a very instructive exercise to go, with the help of a concordance, through the passages in the Old Testament in which salvation is mentioned. Anyone who does this cannot fail to see how in Israel the use of the word becomes gradually refined and raised.

In the early books it is chiefly as a saviour of the nation from its enemies and of individuals from opppression that Jehovah is invoked. But as the history is unrolled we find more and more of higher meaning attached to the word, until in the *Psalms* we often find the change to a higher range of life, closer relation to the spiritual ground of our being, spoken of as salvation.

The salvation offered in the Mysteries is neither of the lower nor of the highest kind. Religion to them is individual, so they do not speak, like the Jews, of national salvation. What they offer to their votaries is in the present life salvation from the evil strokes of destiny; in the hour of death protection from the demons who have then to be met; in a future state of being, happiness under the protection of the guardian deity. But these benefits are not offered to all mankind, but only to the initiate, to those who go through certain tests and rites, who attain to a close relationship with the deity and learn the secret words and actions which he has prescribed. It is through following the directions of the priests that the votaries attain to a certain close relationship to the god, sometimes to so close a relationship that they claim to be a part of the deity, to live with his life and partake of his immortality.

There were two ways in which a close approach to the divine nature was sought in antiquity. The first way was intellectual, by persistent thought and contemplation, through which one came nearer to a deity who was embodied reason. This was the way of the philosophers who argued about God, and of the mystics who thought that they attained to a direct intuition of the divine. From Plato to Plotinus they attempted to know God by intuition or by reasoning. Of course such striving was confined to the few. The Mysteries were at a lower intellectual level, and appealed to the ordinary man, holding that by fasting and prayer, combined with the positive systems of cult attached to them, men could escape from the pollution caused by sin and the tyranny of fate and be assured of a blissful abode in the world beyond the grave.

They had sacred books: in particular the Orphists, who practised a refined form of the Dionysiac religion, had some of the writings attributed to the Founder. These were known to Plato, but they have almost entirely perished, the books now

going under the name of Orpheus being late productions of little value. Under the influence of St. Paul at Ephesus there were burnt many treatises, some of religion, some of magic, the value of which, we are told, amounted to fifty thousand pieces of silver. But the remains of the literature of the Mysteries are trifling: and it would be a great mistake to suppose that any sect possessed any books for a moment comparable to the Jewish Scriptures. On the other hand, we can form from ancient writings an adequate notion of the troops of priests and prophets who went about in later Greece attracting disciples and performing the secret rites, the nature of which they carefully concealed from the civic authorities.

The labours of successive savants, and the constantly increasing body of evidence derived from inscriptions and papyri, and not least from wall-paintings and other works of art, have enabled us to establish certain points which may be regarded as fixed. We can distinguish in most or all of the cults three stages of membership. First, we have the ceremonies of admission to the sacred society. Second, we have full membership with its sacred rites. Third, we have a higher development, what the authorities at Eleusis called the Epopteia, which followed there the myesis at an interval of a year or more. I will speak briefly, in turn, of these three stages.

The rites of admission to the societies seem to have varied. In some there seems to have been a ceremony of baptism, but certainly not in all. Lucius was sprinkled with water by the priest on admission, and he more than once purified himself by bathing in the sea, as did the mystae at Eleusis. Many kinds of purification were in general use in ancient cultus, and they might take the form of sprinkling or baptism; but baptism belongs especially to the Jews, who used the rite in the admission of heathen votaries, and so is prominent in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. But more usual, and more important, were other preparations. Fasting was almost universal, and an abstention from sexual intercourse, which latter feature we find in some of the more orthodox varieties of Greek and Roman pagan religion. Another preparation, of which much is said in the story of Lucius, was sleeping, sometimes in temples, in order to receive divine communications.

Far more important were the proceedings in the sacred festivals. Here especially Christian prejudice has been misleading. Since a sacred meal is the central rite of Christianity, there has been an expectation that there must have been something analogous in pagan Mysteries. No doubt eating and drinking in common assembly did take place in some of them. We learn that at Eleusis the mystae drank a sacred beverage called the kykeon. Justin Martyr asserts, as a matter of common knowledge, that in the rites of Mithras 'bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated.' This statement does not apply to other rites than those of Mithras, which may quite possibly, as Justin asserts, have been influenced by Christian example. Firmicus Maternus quotes a phrase in reference to the Mysteries of Phrygia: 'I have eaten out of the drum, I have drunk out of the cymbal, I have become an initiate of Attis': but we do not know what the phrase means. There is no adequate evidence for the notion that there was in the pagan Mysteries anything at all parallel to the Christian Eucharist.

St. Paul, in his *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, does speak of the table of daemons as a sort of parallel to the Christian Communion. What exactly he means I must leave to later speakers to explain. But I greatly doubt whether he was referring to the pagan Mystery cults. He is speaking of food offered to idols, that is, to the deities, or demons as he calls them, who were worshipped at Corinth, that is, the deities of the public cults. Christians would hardly be tempted to join in the pagan Mysteries. But there were sacred feasts of many kinds in honour of the deities or of ancestors of which Christians might be invited to partake, and against which St. Paul warns his disciples. Probably the nearest parallel to the Christian Communion is offered by the family feasts which took place in honour of deceased heroes and ancestors, feasts at which the dead man was supposed to be present as host or guest. These feasts are the subject of a large class of reliefs sculptured on Greek tombs. But in them there was no question of eating the ancestor or hero: he was present only in spirit as a bond between his descendants. Christians might be easily tempted by friends or relations to be present at these. But St. Paul, to

whom as a Jew such customs were foreign, might naturally regard them as the work of demons.

In fact, a red-herring has been drawn across the trail of our investigation by the introduction of notions drawn from a lower and more barbarous source than the Mysteries. Primitive peoples, more especially those of Teutonic and Slav origin, practise curious rites which have been summed up by Sir James Frazer and others under the head of 'eating the god.' Husbandmen have regarded the last sheaves brought from the corn-field as embodying the Spirit of Vegetation, and have made a custom of eating them roughly moulded into human form. In similar fashion, tribes of hunters who have an animal as totem have accepted the custom of together eating that animal on a solemn occasion, to absorb into themselves its vital powers. So it has been assumed that in the Mysteries there was a solemn meal when the votaries met together to eat some substance or some animal in which dwelt the spirit of the deity of the community.

But the evidence for this is quite inadequate. The eating of the totem belongs to a stratum of civilization far below that of the Mysteries of Hellenism, which, though no doubt they retained elements of savagery, belonged mainly to the people of the flourishing cities of Europe and Asia in the early centuries of our era. I do not think that there is any valid proof that anything like the primitive 'eating of the god' survived into the Hellenistic civilization. Dr. Kennedy quite agrees to this.

We learn from adequate authority, such as the *Bacchae* of Euripides, that the wilder votaries of Dionysus in their transports would tear to pieces and devour kids. That was a temporary relapse into Thracian savagery. That this so-called *omophagia* was practised in some places, especially Thrace and Crete, seems to be proved by ancient testimony. But when we are told that the votaries of Dionysus sometimes ate a live bull, skin and bones and all, common-sense bids us pause. And a Christian writer of the fifth century, Nilus, tells us a 'cock and bull' story of an Arabian tribe who on a solemn occasion meet to devour a raw camel entire. We wonder at the credulity of anthropologists who could take the story seriously. I cannot swallow the camel.

This 'eating the god' does not appear to have been a cus-

tom in connection with any respectable mystic religion. Wha was it, then, that the mystae did and said in their most solem festivals? We have only a few hints in writers very little to b trusted, such as Firmicus Maternus. At Eleusis the main even seems to have been a sacred drama, by which a sympathy wit the grief and wanderings of Demeter was aroused. In som of the Orphic rites, and perhaps in those of Isis, the death of sacred person and his return to life was represented in image Originally this death and re-birth signified the death of vegeta tion in the autumn and its revival in the spring, or perhaps th disappearance of the sun at evening and his rising in the morn ing. But it acquired a more serious and practical meaning fro its mixture in the Mysteries with the notion of a divine Saviou and the hope of a life beyond the grave.

Had I time I might try to enumerate certain customs o early Christianity which had parallels in the Mysteries. Th custom of arranging a pageant of the birth of the Saviour a Christmas is parallel to the setting out of the couch of Adon in the festival at Alexandria. How far the vestments, the ritua and the posturing of priests in the Church of the Roman Empir may have been influenced or suggested by some of the paga ceremonies could only be decided by long archaeological studie And after all is the question, except from the archaeologica point of view, of importance? Do we think the less of Handel oratorios because he often incorporates in them snatches o popular melody? One Christian custom, that of dating th birth of Christ by the solar solstice is generally allowed to be o pagan origin. But, generally speaking, I think that we shoul be sceptical as to any direct influence of the Mysteries on Chri tianity. Parallelism is far more probable than derivation.

So far as we are able to judge, all the teaching furnishe to the votaries consisted in short phrases pronounced by th leaders, and capable of a great variety of meanings, accordin to the beliefs and feelings of those who heard. When they we promised salvation, each would expect the salvation of whic he stood in special need. But it was not only cryptic phras which were employed by the mystagogues. Objects were e hibited which became symbols and full of esoteric meanin The playthings of the infant Dionysus, or the fan of the deit

ne rattle and the pitcher of Isis, the corn-measure of Sarapis, ne pigs and the fruits of Demeter, the cymbals of Cybele, all ad a meaning which only the initiate learned.

This symbolism was carried to a further point in the somehat later religion of Mithras. Many chapels of Mithras have een discovered, especially in Gaul and Germany. They are dorned with abundant sculpture, in which every figure has a eligious signification. But since we have no Mithraic literature whereby to interpret them, they tell us little. The so-called Mithraic liturgy published by Dieterich is neither Mithraic nor liturgy. Symbolism played a great part in all the pagan Mysteries. Dances, actions, dress were all full of instruction. As Aristotle says, the celebrations put the votaries into a certain tate of mind and feeling. What exactly they learned depended on the mentality of the votaries themselves.

But it is a mistake to suppose that they were deeply tinged with materialism. The opposite is rather the case. Their central dea was a communion in spirit with the deity of the Mystery: f rites and practices were in use, they rather were an attempted mbodiment of this communion than valuable for their own ake, though no doubt here, as everywhere, commonplace and prosaic souls would attach great value to acts and ceremonies considered out of their divine connection.

The power of the Mysteries rested not in doctrine or dogma, not in ceremony or cult, not in mythologic tales, but in the profound spiritual needs of mankind and the divine power which met and satisfied those needs, though no doubt at a far lower level than that of the Christian faith. The Mysteries, like the Jewish religion, may have acted as pedagogues to bring men to the school of Christ.

SACRAMENTS AND THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

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THE Synoptic narratives form the basis of all our conception of what Christianity is; so that any modification in our view of them, imposed on us by criticism, whether textual or literary, becomes of serious moment. Fortunately, however, the textual results are fairly well established and are accepted by scholars of every colour, so that to-day any disputes concern interpretation and inference rather than what the authors wrote.

Perhaps a few words should be said about the word 'synoptic' as applied to the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. They are called synoptic because, as compared with the fourth gospel, they all dealt with the life of Christ from the same point of view. They were regarded as independent authorities, and their resemblances as proof of their accuracy. We now know that the second gospel was the earliest written of them, and that it was fully and carefully utilised by the other two in their compilations. Besides this, Matthew and Luke each had at their command another document, which is called *Q*, chiefly concerned with the sayings of Jesus. Besides *Q*, Matthew and Luke each had some additional sources of information, probably documentary but some possibly oral, not all of course of equal value, which are designated by Canon Streeter as *M* and *L* respectively. As regards these two authors, all we can say is that there is a general agreement that Matthew treated his sources with a less wise freedom and much less discrimination than Luke. The latter, as he himself tells us, sifted his information carefully, as a historian, so as to gain the greatest possible accuracy. While it is generally accepted that Mark and Luke wrote the gospels which bear their names, it is quite certain that the first gospel was not written by Matthew the Apostle; though it is more than probable that he or another apostle must have been the author of the very ancient source *Q*, which, though in

the hands of Matthew and Luke, was not used by Mark. It will be seen, therefore, that in using the term Matthew for the first gospel we do not imply anything as regards its true authorship.

What, then, do we find about sacraments in the Synoptic Gospels? Is sacramentalism, in the general sense in which we understand the word, taught or implied by Jesus according to these records? I think the answer is both yes and no; not a wibbly-wobbly yes-no, but a definite yes in one sense and a fairly definite no in another.

First, the affirmative. The Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels is a Character to whom every object in nature appeals, perfectly naturally and inevitably, as bringing into relief some particular aspect of the Divine Nature. Is it the sunshine or rain? That shows God's impartial benevolence toward good and bad together. Is it the beauty of flowers or the song of birds? The world of beauty to Him only has meaning as interpreting the Master-Artist. Is it the children in whom lies the hope of the future? Their unspoken call for guidance and protection is a direct appeal to the heart of God. All earthly objects, animate or inanimate, presented to the vivid imagination of Jesus some worthy and exquisite character of the Father's mind. Without any crankiness or loss of sense of the relative values of persons, animals or things, the whole universe became for Jesus one great and infinitely varied sacrament. He did not invent the sacramental system in nature, did not even discover it; but He lived more continually in its atmosphere than any before. If this be true, then (as it seems to me) the more unlikely does it seem that such an One should do or say anything to isolate any particular aspect of that system, or to delimit any particular vehicle as of superlative import. This, however, would be an *a priori* conclusion, quite unjustified apart from evidence. At this moment it is our business to inquire particularly as to the evidence for sacramental institutions in the Synoptic Gospels.

How many Sacraments, asks the Catechism, hath Christ ordained in His Church? The answer is, Two only, as generally (that is, universally) necessary to Salvation; Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. Does the narrative of His life bear out that statement? I propose to consider the two in turn; and you

will excuse me if, in moving along that path, I pause at moments to look backwards, or raise myself on tiptoe to look over the hedge.

For the proximate origin of Christian baptism we need not go further back than the baptism of John. I do not think that the place of John the Baptizer in Christian origins has been sufficiently or justly appraised or emphasized among Churchmen. He considered himself, and was considered by the early Church, to be the expected forerunner of the Great Messenger of the Lord. Jesus evidently regarded John as a great and venerated teacher. He had certainly come deeply under the influence of John; through John it is probable that the seed of His genius had been nourished until it was ready to burst into flower. John, He said, was the greatest of men that had ever lived; the authority which he exercised was of heavenly origin; whether or no we regard the parable of the vinedressers slaying the heir as referring to the murder of John, it is clear that Jesus looked to John with a veneration far beyond the common present estimate.

Now, if we leave out of account for the moment the narrative of *Luke* i and ii, our natural conclusion from the existing record would be that John was actually the forerunner; that is to say, that he had acquired his fame as a hermit-baptizer long before the baptism of Jesus. If the ministry of Jesus began when He was 'about thirty,' then we must probably allow for a retirement of at least some years between His baptism and the beginning of His ministry. The forty days' temptation represents most likely the culminating point of such a retirement, being analagous to the desert retirement of His forerunner. It is not unnatural to conclude that when Jesus was about twenty years old He was baptized by John, who might then be a man of some forty or fifty years. The same impression is given in the speeches of *Acts*, where St. Peter describes the ministry of Jesus as developing *after* the period of John's preaching (*Acts* x, 37), and where St. Paul uses words which definitely ante-date the preaching of John to the entrance of Jesus (*Acts* xiii, 24). Yet the impression given by the Lucan introduction is that John and Jesus were contemporaries; indeed, that John was only some six or nine months older than Jesus. Though this is not stated

in terms, it seems to be implied. Yet even here there may be intended quite a long interval between the events of chapters i and ii, specially as the growth of John into manhood and even his lengthy sojourn in the desert are mentioned before the narrative of the birth of Jesus. I cannot help believing that such an interval (say of twenty or thirty years) between the births of John and Jesus is the fact of history. I cannot pretend to be able to appraise the value of the much-talked-of passages in the Slavonic *Josephus*; but, whatever be their origin, they imply that the work of John preceded that of Jesus by a generation.[1] This historical note about John is not irrelevant to the present subject, because the historical setting is essential to a right grasp of the relation of the Johannine and Christian baptism.

The guiding note in the comparison of the two is that John baptized with water, Jesus with Spirit. The second was a contrast to the first. In the synoptic records there is no suggestion that Jesus or His disciples used water-baptism; but the fourth gospel (*John* iii, 22; iv, 2) states that, even before the disappearance of John, the disciples of Jesus had begun to baptize to a considerable extent, though Jesus himself did not do so. No one will suggest that at this early period of the ministry Jesus can have instituted the rite of Christian Baptism; the context makes it clear that the disciples of Jesus were carrying on the tradition of John, gradually expanding the teaching of John into that of Jesus. Thus, in spite of the contrast between the Baptism of water and the Baptism of spirit—the one signifying cleansing from the past, the other inspiration for the future—there was also a continuity. Jesus had been a pupil of John, though He far outstripped His master. What was He to do in order to bring in the era of spirit-baptism? Was He to abrogate water-baptism? Water-baptism was not a satisfactory expression of His purpose; yet baptism of the spirit must also be preceded by repentance, of which John's baptism was significant. Nor could He nor His disciples forget that His own Baptism of

[1] Of the age of Jesus Himself or the length of His Ministry we have meagre information. After His baptism He is said to have been 'about thirty' (*Luke* iii, 23). The only other guidance is the remark: 'Thou art not yet fifty years old . . . ' (*John* viii, 5). The 'forty and six years' of *John* ii, 20, may be a cryptic reference to the age of Jesus. The limits of conjecture, therefore, are wide.

Spirit—His consciousness of His Messianic mission—was given Him at the time of His water-baptism by John. The conclusion He reached, apparently, was that His disciples should not be forbidden to take up John's parable, but He himself refrained from baptizing His followers with water.

The descent of the Spirit upon Jesus at His baptsim—a vision, according to the Marcan story, seen by Himself, and seemingly by Himself alone—exercised a most profound influence on His followers. To them it was not only the proof but the very substance of His Messianic calling. The feast of the Baptism was adopted very early in Church History and has continued ever since—though few are aware that our Feast of the Epiphany represents, not the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, but the manifestation of the Spirit to Christ.

The disciples' habit of carrying on the Baptist's form of baptism was perfectly naturally continued in the Christian Church. The only statement that water-baptism in a specifically Christian sense was instituted by Christ occurs at the end of the first gospel; repeated, to be sure, in another form in the 'Longer Ending' of Mark by a later hand (*Matt.* xxviii, 19; *Mark* xvi, 16). Though the Trinitarian formula in *Matthew* is doubtless a gloss, the institution itself ('in my name') seems to be part of the original text. We cannot say from what source the author culled this sentence, but like several other statements found only in the first gospel, there is general agreement that the authority on which they are based is relatively unreliable. This is frankly admitted by conservative and orthodox scholars like Mr. N. P. Williams, who classes Matthew's authority for this institution as 'featherweight.' The strength of the conservative attitude as to the Dominical Institution consists in the general acceptance and adoption of water-baptism by the primitive Church. But this, I think, is adequately explained by the fact that John's baptism had been (may we say) permissively adopted by Jesus's disciples as following the same order as in the experience of Jesus Himself. If Jesus had issued a specific and recognized instruction to baptize all the Gentile converts (as in *Matthew*) it becomes difficult to explain St. Paul's strong statement that he was not sent to baptize but to preach the gospel (I *Cor.* i, 17). Could St. Paul have used such language—Paul,

the apostle of the Gentiles—in face of a specific command with specific reference to Gentiles? St. Paul's argument is not intended to flout baptism; but neither does it square with the full-blown ecclesiastical conception.

If the explanation which I have sketched of the origin of Christian baptism be approximately true, then, while there is much to commend baptism as an introduction to the spiritual life of a Christian, there is nothing to suggest that the most orthodox Christian should regard water-baptism as 'generally necessary for salvation.' The experience of the early Church showed them that the gift of the Spirit could be independent of the rite, and that experience has been confirmed in later ages.

When now we pass on to consideration of the Eucharist, we find very different and puzzling features, but a strangely similar historical undercurrent. The setting and the events of the Last Supper are both obscure. The synoptists speak of it definitely as the Passover, though the Lucan saying, 'With desire I desired . . .' is of ambiguous meaning, while both St. Paul and St. John place its institution twenty-four hours earlier. But we are here only concerned with what passed at the Supper. The basic document (*Mark*) gives a simple account of the distribution of the bread and wine, with particular reference to the impending tragedy ('This is my body . . . This is my blood of the covenant'; 'I will not again drink . . .') but with no suggestion of the institution of a permanent rite for His inner circle of followers, much less for Christians for all time. Even Matthew, whom from his general tendencies, otherwise known, we should most expect to do so, adds no word suggesting a permanent ecclesiastical rite. In *Luke* the distribution of the bread and wine are transposed (wine and bread), but the words, in respect of the bread ('This do in remembrance of me'),[1] are now recognized as being an importation into the Lucan narrative from St. Paul's account of the Supper in I *Cor.* xi, 23, 26. Nor in the fourth gospel is there any record of such an institution, though *John* vi clearly implies the actual existence of the sacramental rite in the Church of his day.

Now it is very strange if in none of the gospels is there any record of the institution by Christ of a rite which came to be

[2] Contained both in A.V. and R.V.

regarded as the principal and most necessary means of spiritual life and progress. If it was so regarded by the first disciples, it is almost inconceivable that it should escape narration by Mark, the probable recorder of what St. Peter said; by Luke, the painstaking historian; or by Matthew, interested as he was in matters of Church authority. These authors were all prominent members of some regional Church, whether Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, or Ephesus; if the tradition existed strongly in any of these, it was almost bound to be perpetuated in any accepted document. We are constantly, and quite soundly, warned of the dangers and fallacies of the argument from silence; but there are cases where the argument from silence is strong, and this appears to me to be one of them.

Now these facts as to the content of the synoptic narrative do not appear to be in dispute. They are frankly accepted, for example, by Mr. N. P. Williams in his contribution to *Essays Catholic and Critical*; but his inferences are widely different. He considers the saying 'I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine . . .' as the satisfactory equivalent of an actual institution. This may seem to you, as it does to myself, a far-fetched suggestion; but Mr. Williams explains as follows: He believes that Schweitzer and J. Weiss have established the centrality of the conception of 'the kingdom' in Christ's teaching and the secondary character of His ethical doctrine. His teaching on the kingdom was couched in apocalyptic language—including the Messianic banquet, and the rest—but while He taught in apocalyptic He did not mean it in the then accepted sense. He meant that the eating and drinking at the Last Supper were but a rehearsal (the last rehearsal) of the real Messianic banquet of the future. Mr. Williams paraphrases the meaning of Jesus thus: 'This is the last of these prophpetic actions. . . . The next celebration of this feast will not be, as this is, a provisional and anticipated transaction of the sacramental mystery; it will be the mystery itself, consummated in the Kingdom of God, *that is, in My Church.*' And again: 'The Apostles at the Last Supper did not feed upon Christ, as we do now, in reality, but only in figure; their first real communion can only have been made after the body and blood had been glorified.'[2] I confess

[3] *Essays Catholic and Critical*, pp. 406, 423.

to disappointment at so rhapsodic an ending to an otherwise able essay. Mr. Williams accepts Schweitzer's premisses but rejects his conclusion; he interprets the words of Christ in a sense which would not have been repugnant, but only unintelligible, to St. Paul, to the writers of the gospels, and to the then Christian community. He seems to forget that the authors of the gospels wrote down what they believed to be the sense of what Jesus said; not a phonographic record of His words, into which strange mystical meanings might be imported by later ages. The hypothesis that the words 'I will no more drink . . .' constitute the equivalent of a Dominical Institution appears to me to kick over the traces of sound criticism, to the great danger of the vehicle which it is sought to guide along the road. The essay as a whole, however, is well worth reading, as it gives a very fair description of the present position.

The fact is that St. Paul is our only authority for the actual institution of the Lord's Supper.[4] But, on the other hand, there is no doubt that the practice of breaking bread was regularly carried on by the Church from a very early date after the crucifixion. Here surely we have a phenomenon closely parallel with that of Christian baptism; I think that a reasonable explanation may be sought along similar lines.

Let us think of the attitude of Christ toward all the social acts of life. All social eating and drinking had for Him a sacramental character. The thanksgiving over the bread was habitual. It occurred at the feeding of the multitudes, and, so far as we can gather, at every social meal. So characteristic was it of Himself that, after the journey to Emmaus with Cleopas and the other disciple (who presumably were not present at the Last Supper), though the physical features of Christ did not bring recognition, nor even His voice in itself, yet His manner of breaking of bread at once assured them of His identity. The action of Jesus at the Last Supper must have been of the same kind, though on that occasion the imminent catastrophe lent to its already sacramental character a very special significance. He was consciously reaching the climax of His life of service and sacrifice; what wonder if the breaking of the bread and the outpoured wine suggested broken body and shed blood? And

[4] I *Cor.* xi, 23-26.

that, not to alter, but to intensify the sacramental character of the meal.[5]

But whether or no He gave instruction for the continuance of such a rite, it was natural and even inevitable that His disciples should use certain of their common meals as specially commemorative of the Last Supper and its sequel. It was also perfectly natural and healthy (within limits) that such a habit should become specialized as a central feature of the sacramental life of the Church. Whether it was or was not ordained by Christ, I cannot think that any who set any store by useful historic institutions would desire to neglect, much less to decry, that form of self-consecration; for to all of us, in some measure, it has become a source of insight and strength.

Our conclusion, however, is that there is in the Synoptic Gospels an entire lack, and that a very remarkable lack, of sound historic evidence of the institution by Christ Himself either of the rite of Baptism or of the Eucharist as special sacraments to be observed and practised by all who profess themselves Christians. If this conclusion is found to hold good, where do we stand? What difference would it make? That will depend on what has been our habit of thought regarding the sacramental life. To myself I do not find that it makes much difference. The Eucharist remains a very special means of sacramental grace, wherein we may reach communion with and participation in the Spirit of Christ. It gives response to the instinctive demand of the great mass, even of spiritually-minded men and women, for some great example in nature or in social

[5] If we can bring ourselves to disentangle the sacramental from the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist, I think we shall find no essential difference between the Eucharistic Sacrament and the Sacraments of Nature. Food and drink are perfectly natural media for sacramental perception; the difference is that the one is used by instruction, the other by intuition. Yet this difference—accidental as it is—is of great moment. It seems to me that Jesus would have opposed institutional sacramentalism, at any rate any such as would appear to limit sacramental perception to one particular form. Such limitation is too apt to occur where a great gulf is fixed in thought between the Sacraments of Nature and that of the Eucharist. I would even say that the Eucharist is misused if it fails to quicken our perception of God, both in natural objects and in social relations—if it fails to make us feel that

> 'Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God.'

life on which to model our sacramental thought; for some visible and palpable fire at which we may warm our chilled souls; for God is not in *all* our thoughts, as He was in Christ's.

Jesus was too great a sacramentalist to care much for institutions. The trouble with us is that we need constant stimuli to our dull imagination. And perhaps those of us who tend to limit our consciousness of sacramental perception to the services of the Church would do well to try and spread the same principle into all our relations with Nature as a whole; for not until we have done so can we reach anywhere near the goal which Jesus reached. For the essence of all sacraments, whether formal or informal, is that the external objects of nature and life shall be so apprehended that they may become windows—it is Professor Lake's metaphor—through which we may get a glimpse of God, and also through which the Divine light may find its way into our lives.

I would conclude by saying that if, on the evidence of the Synoptic Gospels, we have to admit that it is not only possible, but even probable that Jesus did not Himself institute either Baptism or the Eucharist as specific sacraments, that does not mean that we are undermining the whole structure of the Christian religion; but that, in putting these institutions in their true historic perspective, we are getting down to a truer view of the mind of Christ, the accurate understanding of which must, in the nature of the case, be the groundwork of any religion which worthily bears His name.

SACRAMENTS IN ACTS AND THE PAULINE EPISTLES

By the Rev. J. S. Bezzant, M.A., Vice-Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

THE Pauline Epistles consist of some ten letters covering a period of about ten or fifteen years.[1] The author has influenced Christian thought more than any other disciple of Christ, but it must be recognized that this is very largely due to the value of his letters as evidence of the thought and practice of the early Church, coupled with the fact of their early elevation to the rank of Holy Scripture. St. Paul, whose great personality triumphed over serious disadvantages, both personal and environmental, was pre-eminently a missionary and an organizer. The period covered by his extant correspondence was one of phenomenal activity. Sometimes he wrote in haste, sometimes with care; sometimes under great emotional stress, and always with the sense of that which came upon him daily, the care of all the churches. It was, moreover, a time of rapid development in his own experience and thought. The old and the new jostled each other in a mind which sometimes did not attempt a fuller reconciliation or a more complete distinction between them than the practical, working needs of the moment seemed to require. Hence the Pauline letters have always been at the mercy of framers of hypotheses who have sought to reduce them to a consistency which they do not easily reveal. The tyranny of an hypothesis is a very real thing, quite independent of its orthodoxy. The hypothesis, once it is conceived, fosters those presuppositions which are often essential to its own maintenance; to other presuppositions it tends to assign a value and a validity relative to the same end. The hindrance to the attainment of truth is obvious, but inevitable. It is particularly operative in

[1] If the early date for *Galatians* be accepted, *i.e.* just before the Council of Jerusalem (*Ac.* xv), this Epistle stands apart from the main group. The Pauline authorship of *Colossians* and *Ephesians* is very probable, but there is some ground for reasonable doubt. With regard to i and ii *Timothy* and *Titus*, I accept the general conclusion of Dr. P. N. Harrison in *The Pastoral Epistles*, viz. that in their present form they are not St. Paul's work, though they embody fragments of Pauline letters.

any consideration of the group of questions concerning the origin and significance of the specifically sacramental rites of Christianity. I do not claim to be free where so many have been in unconscious bondage; but, wherever the critical study of the Bible is adopted with any seriousness, two considerations arise which, in supplanting their opposites, make for the freedom essential to any useful treatment of the subject of my paper. One is concerned with the nature of the documents, the other with the teaching contained in them. First, we do not approach the Epistles with the determination at all costs to extract from them a consistent theology, whether orthodox or unorthodox, in which every difficulty has been explained, and every contradiction reconciled. Such a proceeding, though justifiable in pre-critical times, is to-day simply stupid. That is our first consideration. Our second is this. No doctrinal statement can be established as true simply by a quotation from St. Paul's Epistles. If a certain doctrine appears not to have been held by him, it by no means follows that the Church of to-day is precluded from holding it; and conversely, if certain opinions seem to have found a place, even a prominent place, in St. Paul's thought, it does not follow from that alone that they must find a place in ours.

I. BAPTISM.

(a) *Acts.*

St. Paul was received into the Church. The earlier chapters of *Acts* purport to give some account of that primitive Christian society; the later chapters to cover the period contemporaneous with St. Paul's literary activity. The book as a whole is almost certainly the work of a companion of St. Paul. Whatever its historical value, it is clearly evidence, dating from a time subsequent to the latest Pauline Epistle, of what the author believed the faith and practice of the Church to have been both before and during the Christian activity of St. Paul. The two sacramental rites which are found in the Epistles are Baptism and the Lord's Supper; according to *Acts*, St. Paul found these two, or at least the beginnings of them, already existing in the primitive Church of Jerusalem.[2] There are a dozen references

[2] A third, the laying on of hands, is found in *Acts*, but is never referred by St. Paul.

to Christian baptism in *Acts*, some of them certainly, and mos of them presumably, to baptism with water in or into the nam of Jesus or the Lord Jesus. At Pentecost, Peter exhorts th crowd to 'repent and be baptized,' and those who received hi word 'were baptized'; when the Samaritans 'believed Phili preaching good tidings concerning the Kingdom of God and th name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women Philip and the eunuch enter the water 'and he baptized him" the converted Saul, when Ananias came to him, 'arose and wa baptized'; Cornelius and his household receive the Holy Spiri whereupon 'Peter commanded them to be baptized in the nam of Jesus Christ'; when St. Paul and Silas are miraculousl released from prison, their jailer 'was baptized, he and all h immediately'; later, 'many of the Corinthians believed an were baptized.' Baptism was undoubtedly the rite of initiatio into the Christian society. Did it possess any other significance

(1) Two references connect this baptism, like that of John th Baptist, with the remission of sins. In his Pentecostal sermo Peter urges his hearers to 'be baptized every one of you in th name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins,' and Paul, i his defence to the Jerusalem mob, is reported as giving the wor of Ananias on the occasion of his own baptism, 'Arise, and b baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.'[3] Th candidates for baptism, whether of John the Baptist, or of th early Church, would doubtless regard the act of baptism accordance with the thought of their time; at least, there is n evidence that they did otherwise. It would be natural for the to regard the ceremonial act as effecting the remission of sin though repentance was a necessary preliminary to the act. Th use of the 'name' of Jesus was possibly to distinguish Christia baptism from that of John, though no doubt 'the name' w as 'mighty to save' from sin, and from destruction in the a proaching end of the age, as to heal the lame man who was la at the Beautiful gate of the temple.

(2) In two passages the author of *Acts*[4] contrasts *John* baptism as 'with water' and *Christian* baptism as 'with the Ho Spirit.' In the opening verses of his book, he ascribes to th

[3] *Ac.* xxii, 16.

[4] Or his sources.

risen Christ a prophecy of John the Baptist. 'For John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence'; and Peter, in defending his action in eating in the house of Cornelius, is made to say, 'The Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning, and I remembered the word of the Lord how that He said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

These two passages show that, if not Jesus or John the Baptist and Peter themselves, at least the author of the third Gospel and Acts, like the authors of the other Gospels, could use the word 'baptize' in a metaphorical sense for baptism with the Spirit.

(3) But was this baptism with the Spirit a necessary concomitant of the baptism with water? Did the latter effectuate the former? *Acts* supplies no real evidence that it did, and some definite evidence that it did not. There is only one passage relating to the time before St. Paul's activity which can at all reasonably be so interpreted, and in that one the interpretation is neither necessary nor the most natural. On the day of Pentecost, Peter thus exhorts the crowd: 'Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' But these words are recorded immediately after the fulfilment of that promise of Spirit baptism which, in the previous chapter, had been foretold and contrasted with water baptism. The Apostles had received it without being baptized; of those who believed Peter's words we are told that they were baptized and added to the Lord, but not that they received the Spirit. The most natural meaning of the verse is that by repentance and baptism the hearers would gain remission of sins and entry into the Christian community which had received the promised Spirit, and so, ultimately, they would receive it too. There is no necessary and directly effectual connexion between baptism and the gift of the Spirit.

There is one later incident in *Acts*,[5] in which St. Paul is the chief actor, which is sometimes regarded as implying that baptism with water conferred the Spirit, but here again it is more than doubtful if it really does so. St. Paul arrives at Ephesus

[5] *Ac.* xix, 1-7.

and finds 'certain disciples' and asks them if they received the Spirit when they believed. Note that the question implies the possibility of Christian belief, and therefore, by implication of baptism, without a consequent manifestation of the gift of the Spirit. The disciples' reply confesses an ignorance of the possibility of the gift. Paul asks, 'Into what then were ye baptized?' They said, 'Into John's baptism.' St. Paul replies that John's was a baptism of repentance, and then, like the author of the Fourth Gospel, represents John as urging belief 'on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus,' whereon they are baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Clearly St. Paul's second question, 'Into what then were ye baptized?' was more naturally called forth by their ignorance than because they did not manifest the spiritual gift, the absence of which his first question allows the possibility; and that second question is alone responsible for any real connexion between baptism and the Spirit in the incident. They certainly receive the Spirit, but not through the baptism, but through the subsequent laying on of Paul's hands.

(4) In *Acts*, in so far as the gift of the Spirit is connected with any outward rite, it is not baptism, but the laying on of hands. It is quite clear that when Philip baptized the Samaritans, they did not thereby receive the Spirit; when he baptizes the eunuch nothing is said of the gift of the Spirit. To the Samaritans the Spirit is given later, after prayer and the laying on of hands by Peter and John, just as the disciples of Ephesus received the Spirit when Paul laid his hands on them. The only difference is that the laying on of hands at Ephesus seems to have followed baptism almost at once, while at Samaria it certainly did not. In Tertullian's day, the gift of the Spirit is definitely connected with the laying on of hands which immediately followed the rise of the candidate from the baptismal water. Only if this was the practice from the first can it be claimed that the gift of the Spirit was at all directly connected with baptism. It appears that from the beginning it was not so. At Samaria Peter and John are not represented as administering the laying on of hands as a definitely recognized rite of the Church; they laid their hands on Philip's converts because, in spite of their belief and baptism, they manifested no spiritual gift. Nor is there convincing

evidence that Peter and John went to Samaria for the purpose of conferring the Spirit. Philip's evangelization of Samaritans was a new departure, and Peter and John are sent, not to complete it, but to investigate it. In the same way, Barnabas is sent to Antioch to investigate the first evangelization of Greeks. No doubt the laying on of hands was regarded in a quasi-magical fashion, as a means of imparting pneumatic gifts. In the Old Testament Joshua is described as 'full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him.' Jesus laid on his hands in blessing the children and sometimes in healing the sick. In the primitive Church healing was a spiritual gift. The laying on of hands was not used exclusively for the bestowal of the Spirit. It was used in setting apart the Seven, who, as a condition of their choice, had been required to be already full of the Spirit. Ananias lays his hands on Paul that he may receive his sight; Barnabas and Paul are commissioned for their missionary work with the laying on of the hands of prophets and teachers of Antioch. Indeed, so natural a practice may well have become general, before any doctrine of the bestowal of the Spirit by its means was reached.

It appears, then, that the single instance in *Acts* in which the gift of the Spirit through the laying on of hands seems to follow soon after baptism is that of the twelve disciples who were re-baptized at Ephesus. No doubt this influenced the later theology of baptism and the laying on of hands as parts of one rite conferring the Spirit, but the incident itself merely shows baptism and the laying on of hands in a relation of historical juxta position, not in a relation of necessary theological connexion. To assert more than this is to strain the evidence in favour of later theology rather than to interpret it in the light of contemporary practice. Such straining of the evidence is very frequent. A recent example can be seen in the brilliant contribution of the Rev. N. P. Williams to the interesting and useful book, *Essays Catholic and Critical*.[6] Mr. Williams asserts that this incident in *Acts* (xix, 1—7) shows John's baptism and Christian baptism as differentiated not only by the use of 'the name,' but also by the gift of the Spirit. Unfortunately for Mr. Williams' thesis, in the case of Jesus Himself, the reception of the Spirit

[6] See p. 410.

immediately follows His partaking of *John's baptism*; the Ephesians also receive the Spirit after their baptism, when Paul lays his hands on them. There is no more reason to suppose that Christian baptism effectuated the reception of the Spirit by the Ephesians than that John's baptism effectuated it in the case of Jesus. There is just as much, or just as little, reason to connect the rite and the gift in the one case as in the other. Mr. Williams also states that this incident in *Acts* shows that John's baptism and Christian baptism are 'entirely different things,' not 'imperfect and perfect forms of the same thing.' But the immediately preceding verses in *Acts* tell us that Apollos, who 'was instructed in the way of the Lord and taught carefully the things of Jesus,' knew only the baptism of John, and that Priscilla and Aquila instructed him 'more accurately' or 'more carefully'; nor are we told that he was re-baptized, or that thereafter he received the Spirit, in which, indeed, he seems to have been already fervent. The evidence so little accords with Mr. Williams' thesis, that he has been led to supplement argument with exaggeration.

We may briefly summarize the position and significance of baptism, as, according to *Acts*, it existed in the Church when Paul was received into it.

(*a*) The reception of the Spirit, which, with the confession of Jesus as Messiah, was the distinguishing mark of the Christian, was itself regarded as a 'baptism' which could be contrasted with John's baptism with water.

(*b*) There was a baptism with water, like John's, which was the regular rite of initiation. It was 'unto the remission of sins'[7] which doubtless it was regarded as effecting, though we must remember that the author of *Acts* is also the author of the Third Gospel, in which he does not suggest that Jesus demanded any other condition of forgiveness than the repentance of the contrite heart. With this water baptism the name of Jesus was associated, though whether as itself effecting the forgiveness, or imparting to the water the power of doing so, we cannot tell.

[7] And therefore may well have been the *preparation* for baptism with the Spirit.

(*c*) The reception of the Spirit, which could be thought of as a metaphorical baptism, was often, but not always,[8] mediated by the laying on of hands, which rite, as far as *Acts* is concerned, is not necessarily associated with baptism.

It should also be noted that:

(1) Whatever St. Paul may have thought and taught about baptism, *Acts* gives no indication that its author thought St. Paul had modified or influenced the earlier practice; yet *Acts* is the work of a companion of Paul, written subsequently to the latest Pauline Epistle.

(2) Throughout *Acts*, the gift of the Spirit is not primarily thought of as aiding the moral and religious life. Almost without exception, the stress falls on particular outward manifestations or exceptional endowments. Nor is there any hint that baptism, whether of water or of the Spirit, however effected, was regarded as conferring sacramental regeneration, or as effecting a mystical union with Christ, or as implanting a germ of new spiritual life. There was indeed salvation in the name of Jesus, and in no other, but it was salvation from destruction in the coming apocalyptic end of the age.

(b) *The Pauline Epistles.*

Many modern critical scholars believe that 'sacramental teaching is central in the primitive Christianity to which the Roman Empire began to be converted.'[9] With the exception of some Anglo-Catholic scholars, who seem very ready to accept this gift from hostile hands, most of those who hold it believe also that this sacramental teaching formed no part of the teaching of Jesus, or of the earliest Christian Church. They believe it to have been the creation of St. Paul, who, consciously or unconsciously, transformed the primitive Galilean Gospel into a 'Mystery Religion' like those which formed the dominant religious element in his Hellenistic environment. Thus, when St. Paul speaks of baptism, or makes use of any language suggestive of 'Mystery' ideas, his ideas and his language must have

[8] *e.g.* At Pentecost, and in the gift of the Spirit to Cornelius.

[9] K. Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 385.

been derived from them, and have the same significance in the religion of their adoption as in the religions of their origin. Many would allow that, in St. Paul's usage, they have undergone a refining process; some doubt it; a few deny it. To this triumph of analogical method we shall return later. Leaving it on one side for the present, it is interesting, if only as a change, to see what significance attaches to the Apostle's actual references to baptism, remembering how little of the doctrine of the practice is revealed by his Hellenistic companion, the author of *Acts*, which he compiled subsequently to the period of Paul's literary activity. The references are few and brief. He tells the Galatians that they are

> 'All sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.' [10]

He thanks God that, with a few exceptions, he baptized none of the Corinthians, and adds that Christ sent him 'not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel.'[11] Enumerating the gross moral offenders who will be excluded from the Kingdom of God he writes:

> 'And such were some of you: but ye washed yourselves, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.' [12]

Later in the same Epistle, after insisting that varying spiritual gifts are the working of one and the self-same Spirit, he writes:

> 'For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free: and were all made to drink of one Spirit.' [13]

He reminds Roman Christians of the significance of their baptism in these words:

> 'Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.' [14]

Almost the same words are found in the Epistle to the Colossians who were

[10] *Gal.* iii, 26 *f.*
[11] *Cor.* i, 16 *f.*
[12] *I Cor.* vi, 11.
[13] *I Cor.* xii, 12 *f.*
[14] *Rom.* vi, 3 *f.*

> 'Circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.' [15]

Again in Ephesians:

> '*There is* one body, and one Spirit . . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.' [16]

These are all the certain references to any theology of baptism in the Pauline Epistles. Ephesian husbands are exhorted to love their wives

> 'Even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word'; [17]

but here the simile in mind is probably not baptism, but the lustration of a bride before marriage; in any case a baptism of the Church partakes of the nature of metaphor. In the Epistle to Titus there is a reference to salvation 'through the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,'[18] but it is generally recognized that the phrase 'laver of regeneration' is as foreign to Paul's vocabulary as the idea of regeneration is familiar to his thought. It is certainly not St. Paul's.

Professor Lake, writing of baptism in St. Paul's Epistles, tells us 'the water was the actual "efficacious sign" used in the mystery; the Name was the power which enabled the water to be used in this way; and the Spirit was the Divine life (or living being?) which made a "new creature" of the initiate.'[19] It may be so. But when we observe that, in the Pauline passages I have quoted there is no explicit reference to the *water* of baptism, not a single reference to the Name as definitely connected with the water, not a single statement that the Spirit 'which made a "new creature" of the initiate' was given in baptism, we may doubt whether the Pauline Epistles are the main source of Dr. Lake's information. If Dr. Lake's words summarize what was really fundamental in St. Paul's conception of Christianity, the Apostle never thought it worth a clear statement.

[15] *Col.* ii, 11 *f.*
[16] *Eph.* iv, 4-6.
[17] *Eph.* v, 25 *f.*
[18] *Titus* iii, 5.
[19] *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul,* pp. 385 *f.*

Now there is a line of argument which stresses the fact that some of St. Paul's references to the words 'baptism' and 'baptize' may have a symbolical or metaphorical, rather than an efficaciously sacramental, significance. That St. Paul could use them metaphorically is seen in his phrase about the Israelites being 'baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.' There is no suggestion that the Israelites were baptized into the name of Moses, and so far from being baptized in the sea, they went over on dry land. The Egyptians received the baptism! So, it is urged, when the Apostle writes, 'For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body . . . and were all made to drink of one Spirit,' the words do not exclude the interpretation that 'the one Spirit' means the element in which they were baptized, so that we have here a reference to the Spirit baptism which is, in some passages in *Acts*, contrasted with water baptism. Other passages, if the principle be established, can be interpreted in the same way. If so, the use of 'the name' in this connexion means that it was used in a confession of Jesus as Lord and Christ, not in a formula necessary to the due performance of some outward sacramental rite. For those who hold this position, it is an easy step to the belief that, when Paul indubitably refers to water baptism, he regards it merely as an outward sign, a rite of initiation into the Christian Church, typifying, perhaps, the essential inward change, but not effecting it or imparting any spiritual gift. If it is established, such a conclusion can be supported by such considerations as the following:

(*a*) The comparatively few references to outward signs in St. Paul's Epistles. It is urged that they can have meant little to him when, in his most doctrinal Epistle,[20] he mentions baptism only once, and the Eucharist not at all. Moreover, when he does mention them, it is to protest against the abuse of them, and the neglect of their significance in the moral sphere. There is never a word about their necessity.

(*b*) The great themes on which St. Paul dwells at length are Forgiveness and Justification; the death and resurrection of Christ in which Christians share by dying unto sin and living unto righteousness; the possession of the Spirit as the in-

[20] i.e. *Romans*.

dispensable condition of the Christian life, which, not to have, is to be none of Christ's; above all, the transcendental mystical union with Christ. In the great majority of St. Paul's references to these doctrines there is no reference to baptism at all. It is occasionally connected with Forgiveness and Justification, but only in the most cursory fashion. The indispensable Spirit is never said to be given by means of baptism: rather it is through 'the hearing of faith' as opposed to 'the works of the law'; if the 'one Spirit' in which the Corinthians were baptized means not the element, but the result of baptism, the emphasis is still on 'the one body' into which they were baptized, and this is the only place where baptism, effectual or metaphorical, has any prominence in the Apostle's many references to the gifts of the Spirit. It is not baptism but faith which makes possible the righteousness which by the law was impossible. It is in response to faith that God gives, or by faith that man secures, the benefits won by the death and resurrection of Christ. Justification is by faith. Even the mystical union with Christ which means that 'it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me' is the result, not of baptism but by faith, 'the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.'

The foregoing interpretation of the Pauline conception of baptism is familiar; it is also plausible. It has the air of being in accord with the whole tenour, that is to say, the bulk, of the Apostle's teaching. Nevertheless we are persuaded that it is quite untenable. The overwhelming majority of Paul's converts were Hellenists or Gentiles proper. They were only too familiar with baptismal rites as magical or quasi-magical sacraments, effecting not only initiation into religious brotherhoods, but also union with gods and a share in the benefits conferred by them. There is not the slightest doubt about the meaning they would attach to baptism, or that St. Paul was unaware of it. If then he wished them to understand Christian baptism otherwise than they would naturally do, it is incredible that he should not have explained wherein it differed. In fact, he does explain, but only in one respect. When he mentions baptism it is to stress its moral significance: his converts must grasp what is the necessary

consequence in the sphere of conduct of these results which they would regard baptism as effecting. He does not deny the efficacy of baptism. The difference between the Christians of Corinth or of Rome and the Apostle is the difference between an unethical and a sternly ethical sacramentalism : it is not the difference between sacramentalism and a moral religion with an appendage of symbolic rites.

Even if we put aside all question of the significance of baptism in the minds of St. Paul's converts, it is still sufficiently clear that his allusions do not refer to a rite which was only an accompanying symbol of spiritual experiences and results effected by other means. His references are few, but they always appear in contexts which are the heart of his gospel. Converts are baptized 'into Christ Jesus,' and when a man is 'in Christ, he is a new creation.' When St. Paul speaks of putting on Christ; of being buried with Him in order that as He was raised from the dead Christians also should walk in newness of life; when he insists on the evils of faction which were destroying the Corinthian Church, and on the importance of unity, then it is that he mentions baptism. There is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.' If, for St. Paul, baptism was only an outward rite of initiation, perhaps not necessary in all cases, nor effecting anything that could not otherwise be obtained, the difficulty is not to understand why there are so few references to it, but why, in such contexts, there are any at all. We know St. Paul's mind about other outward ordinances or observances when their importance was exaggerated or when it was attempted to make them of general obligation. The only natural conclusion from the way in which Paul refers to baptism is that it was a rite intimately bound up with, and deeply coloured by, those profound spiritual facts and experiences in connexion with which he mentions it. If the spiritual facts and experiences depend on faith only, which is a daily necessity, why are they ever associated with an outward rite, which in the lives of his converts was a past event?

Further, it is extremely improbable that for St. Paul, baptism would mean something less than it appears to mean in *Acts*. On the contrary, if *Acts* represents the true state of affairs with only moderate accuracy, it is not difficult to understand how baptism

might come to gain the significance which it has in the Pauline Epistles. There is no doubt that, if it was practiced from the first, it was, like John's, 'unto the remission of sins' which it would be regarded as effecting, the name of Jesus being also connected with it. It was the rite of initiation; that is, it effected entrance into a Spirit-charged society in which the believer was in a new relation to Christ. What wonder, therefore, if he too began to manifest the gifts of the Spirit? What more natural in the world of the first century than to connect the Spirit with the rite by which he entered the Spirit-charged society, in which he too received the Spirit? The development into St. Paul's conceptions is neither a long nor a forced one. He associates baptism with:

(*a*) Cleansing from sin, with which is associated the name of Jesus, and sometimes the Spirit. 'For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, and were all made to drink of one Spirit.'

(*b*) Union with Christ. 'For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.'

(*c*) The gift of the Spirit, which is closely connected with union with Christ, since for St. Paul to be 'in Christ' is to be 'in the Spirit.'

Undoubtedly the language, and often the thought, goes beyond anything to be found in the early chapters of *Acts*, but there is no radical and essential difference, particularly if we allow for the intensity of the experiences of a man for whom conversion to Christ meant a violent shifting of the centre round which his whole life revolved.

It appears, then, that the only ground for supposing that for St. Paul faith is essential, and baptism unessential, is that he writes much of the one and little of the other. There is no importance in the disparity. Faith, particularly as St. Paul conceived it, would not be a familiar conception to his ordinary readers, whether Jews or Gentiles; baptism would be understood by everybody. Doubtless the Apostle would have scorned the idea that any spiritual result could be obtained by outward rites alone, without faith. Though in excellence surpassed by love, faith is essential. But that is not the question. The question is

how far the outward rite is essential to the effectual working of faith, or, how faith works in relation to baptism, and baptism in relation to faith. Beyond connecting both with the name and power of the risen Lord, St. Paul does not explain. From the actual contents of his letters, I do not think we can go beyond this point.

II. THE EUCHARIST.

There are probably three, at the most four, allusions in *Acts* to the rite, or the beginning of it, which St. Paul called the Lord's Supper. The allusions are to 'the breaking of bread.' It was probably a meal of fellowship, in which the society 'continued steadfastly,' though it appears to have been held 'at home,' where Christians 'took their food with gladness and singleness of heart.' At Troas, where the Church is assembled 'to break bread,' St. Paul is present, and the gathering appears to have been more formal. In the shipwreck story there is an incident which recalls the practice of Jesus, for whom breaking of bread seems always to have been a solemn action. St. Paul urged the sailors to break their fast; then he took bread and 'gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and he brake it and began to eat.' This is not usually regarded as an Eucharist; why, I do not know. *Acts* gives us no further assistance in determining the meaning of the Eucharist in the early Church.

St. Paul refers to the Eucharist only in the First Epistle to the Corinthians.[21] He then does so in order to correct abuses which had arisen in regard to it. St. Paul's relation of the origin of the rite is probably the earliest written account. The meaning, significance, and value he attached to the Eucharist can best be discovered, not by removing the account of the institution from its context and then enquiring what certain phrases must mean, but by considering his teaching about the rite in the midst of which his account of its origin is set. The Corinthian Church was very factious. This spirit had robbed the Lord's Supper of its meaning:

> 'When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat a Lord's Supper: for in your eating each one taketh (or taketh before) his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken.'

[21] Chs. x and xi.

He then reminds his hearers of what he had already taught them about the origin of the rite. It was of supreme importance, for he had received it 'of the Lord' whom he believed to have commanded its continuance. 'The Lord Jesus,' he says,

> 'Took bread; and when he had given thanks, he break it, and said: This is my body which is for you; this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do, as oft as ye drink, in remembrance of me.'

Then Corinthians are warned against participation in the Supper without self-examination, or unworthily, which, if they do, they are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. They are exhorted to wait for one another when they assemble for its celebration, lest they suffer the judgment which comes on those who 'discern not the body.' The narrative is quite continuous: there is no break in it. The Eucharist is plainly the meal, and the meal the Eucharist. It is extremely doubtful whether then or for some time afterwards, there was any distinction between the Agape or Love Feast and the Eucharist. The main difficulty in the passage is to determine the meaning of the words, 'This is my body' and 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.' There are two objections to any literal interpretation. First, St. Paul, like the Synoptists, represents Jesus as saying 'This is my body' when he was still alive in His body of flesh, eating and drinking in the presence of His disciples. A strictly literal interpretation of the second words would involve us in the absurdity that the cup itself, not the wine in it, is the new covenant. Not only so, but the idea of drinking blood would have been repugnant to any Jew. It is therefore as unlikely that the Twelve would have understood, in any literal sense, that the wine was the blood of Jesus, as it is impossible that they could have understood, in any literal sense, the bread to be His body. As the old Covenant was sealed in blood, so a wine-cup was to be the pledge of the new Covenant which was to be sealed with Christ's blood. The wine represents His covenant-blood, for the words suggest no change whatever in the contents of the cup beyond a change of significance or of value.[22] Similarly with the words 'This is my body.' When St. Paul calls the Church 'the body of Christ'

[22] See the Rev. T. F. Royds in *The Modern Churchman*, February, 1925, p. 632.

the phrase is a simile : it is symbolical. If the bread is His body, is it so in any other sense? St. Paul definitely associates both similies. He writes, 'The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? because one bread, one body, are we, the many.' A little later, in the following chapter, he tells the Corinthians, 'Now ye are the body of Christ.' He does not, as does Bishop Gore, speak of receiving Christ's body from above that we may become His body on earth : he calls the bread, bread, and speaks of partaking the one bread, and of eating the bread and drinking the cup. It is easy to see how unworthy participators, like the Corinthians, are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Their factions and their selfishness destroyed all sense of the unity of the body, so that it was not possible to eat the Lord's Supper. Such conduct, in a rite which was a commemoration of the Lord's death, was indeed (in the language of Hebrews) to count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and so to be guilty of the blood of the Lord. It appears that the bread is the body of Christ in the same sense as Christians are, and I can see no real reason, and strong reasons would be required, for interpreting the words of St. Paul[23] more literally in the one case than in the other.

This, however, is not all. The following words show clearly what St. Paul held the meaning of the Eucharist to be.

> 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? . . . the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to daemons and not to God, and I would not have you share in daemons : you cannot drink of the cup of the Lord and the cup of daemons : you cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of daemons.'

It would appear from this, that there was a consecration of the bread and wine for their sacred purpose. It is also quite clear that St. Paul regards the sharing in daemonic sacrificial meals as implying infection by daemons; just as to eat of the table of daemons involves communion with daemons, so to partake of the table of the Lord involves communion with Him, as well as

[23] I admit that this interpretation is not obvious in the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper, but those accounts are primarily statement, not theology. St. Paul is expounding the theology of the Supper.

with other members of His body. Just as in the wilderness the Israelites ate 'spiritual food' and drank 'spiritual drink,' so do Corinthian Christians when they share in the table and in the cup of the Lord. We must agree with Dr. Lake that, in this passage, St. Paul tells the Corinthians they 'know quite well that the Eucharist is a rite which really conveys that which the heathen erroneously thought to obtain in their sacrificial meals—that is, the participation in the Divine nature.'[24]

St. Paul does not call the Eucharist a sacrifice. He speaks of the sacrifices and of the altar of 'Israel after the flesh,' and of heathen sacrifices; but for his Old Testament types of the Eucharist he goes, not to any Jewish sacrifices, but to the manna and the rock. The death of Christ was a corner-stone in St. Paul's Christianity, and he regarded it as a sacrifice; yet, though he connects the Lord's death with the Eucharist, he does not, in that connexion, refer either to the death, or to the rite which proclaims it, as a sacrifice. Indeed the death of Jesus did not accord with any ordinary definition of sacrifice, nor did the Apostles, according to *Acts*, so describe it. St. Paul seems to have arrived at the conception in meeting the charge that the Messiah had suffered as a criminal. The Eucharist is, for him, the memorial of a by-gone sacrifice; it commemorates the death of Christ, but it does not re-enact it by a miraculous identification of Christ with the bread and wine. As for the theory that the Last Supper as celebrated by Jesus was something less than subsequent Eucharists, that it was a 'shadow Eucharist,' and that Jesus intended the next Eucharist, after His death, to be the reality itself, celebrated in the new world order when the unearthly Kingdom of God should have been brought down from heaven by His suffering,[25] it is only necessary to say that it was demonstrably not the view of St. Paul. When St. Paul wrote *I Corinthians*, so far from believing the Messianic Kingdom to have come, he regarded it as still in the future, though in the near future, within the life-time of some of his readers. In St. Paul's view the Eucharist is not the real Messianic banquet; it is the memorial which proclaims Christ's death only 'till He come.'

[24] *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 213.
[25] See the paper by Dr. Douglas White, p. 332 *f* above.

We may conclude that for St. Paul the Eucharist is a real Sacrament, an efficacious sign. As with Baptism, so with the Eucharist, he does not explain *how* it is effective. The bread and the wine do not seem to represent the flesh and the blood of Christ separated by death: they represent the one body, and the blood of the covenant in which it is one. But if the elements represent the body, He who is the head of the body must be represented by them, too; yet St. Paul's language does not establish his belief in the communication of the glorified body and blood of Christ to the worshipper through the medium of the bread and wine. That is an explanation of the communion of the believer with Christ, but it is an explanation which St. Paul does not give. The Eucharist is a communion with Christ as crucified and risen, and involves a sharing in the manner of life of Him who died and rose again. If, as is probable, there was little distinction between 'the Lord' and 'the Spirit' we may agree with Dr. Lake that the Eucharist was the means whereby Christians shared the life of Jesus as a Spirit.[26] We cannot deny that for St. Paul it was a sacrament which effected union with the exalted Christ.

III. THE MYSTERIES.

We have seen that Sacramentalism has a real place in the Christianity of St. Paul. Whence did he derive it? What is its relation to the Mystery Religions? Does Pauline Christianity represent a transformation of a primitive and largely non-sacramental gospel into a religion in form and content similar to the Mysteries?

There are *a priori* arguments which are sometimes advanced in an attempt to decide the question. It is, we are told, quite inconceivable that Paul, as a Jew and a rigid monotheist, can have done this or that. It is said that a certain attitude on his part towards the Mysteries would have been a psychological impossibility, and so on. We may dismiss such arguments as irrelevant. The problem is not to decide *a priori* what Paul as a Jew could or could not have done, but to try to decide from the

[26] *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 213.

evidence what as a Christian missionary he actually did. *A priori* it was inconceivable that a rigidly monotheistic Jew could have accepted a crucified Messiah, and have associated with God, as of cosmic significance, one who had lived a human life on earth. Very few Jews have ever been able to do so: St. Paul did. When the importance and the greatness of St. Paul consist exactly in such thought and action as, from a study of his antecedents, would have been predicted as impossible for him, it is not of much use to advance any *a priori* considerations as of value in deciding what he must have done or could not have done.

In the Mystery religions there were three general features. (*a*) There were rites of purification, sometimes not destitute of moral significance but predominantly ceremonial and sacramental; (*b*) all were mysteries of communion with some deity or heroized ancestor, though very little is known of the precise nature and meaning of sacred meals in this connexion; (*c*) they all offered a salvation which should extend beyond the grave and gate of death into the life which is to come. St. Paul was a Jew, but a Jew of Tarsus. He had been educated by a Rabbi, but that Rabbi was credited with leanings towards liberalism. At Tarsus in childhood and in his missionary work in Asia Minor, he moved in the atmosphere of the Mysteries; his converts lived in it. Nor is there any doubt that far greater affinities with the Mysteries can be found in his Epistles than exist in the Gospels or in *Acts*. The religious needs which the mysteries partially, and Christianity more adequately, satisfied were the same needs of the same people, in many cases, no doubt, of the same individuals. It would therefore be surprising if there were not many close analogies between Pauline Christianity and the Mysteries. It is true that analogy between two systems cannot of itself prove the derivation of one from the other. Parallelism does not prove dependence. But it is also true that if two systems differ, this does not prove them independent of each other, or prove that fundamentally they have nothing in common. Ideas which form part of the mental furniture of an age affect the minds of all thinking people, and are incorporated into widely differing systems of thought. To avoid them one must needs go out of the world.

This general consideration, however, though important, will hardly suffice to explain the undoubted similarity of Pauline Christianity to the Mysteries. There is evidence which suggests a more direct influence and connexion. St. Paul often uses the technical language of the Mysteries. The Greek words for 'one fully initiated' (τέλειος), for 'learning the secret imparted in mysteries' (μυεῖσθαι, φωτίζειν), as well as the language of magic and of heathen sacrifice,[27] all find a place in his vocabulary. The word 'mystery' itself is used by him of the message with which he is intrusted. It means much more than the revealing of the plan of God, hitherto kept secret, that Gentiles should enter the Kingdom of God. If that were the mystery, it is hard to understand how Paul can have thought that knowledge of it would have made impossible the crucifixion of Christ by the rulers of this age. The mystery is much more than the preaching of the Messiahship of Jesus. It is, in fact, the personal indwelling of Christ in the heart.[28] The mystery which God has revealed is 'Christ in you, the hope of glory'; it is not only a revelation of general salvation, but of general salvation through Jesus Christ and of the means by which it is effected; that is, by faith, which as we have seen, we are not justified in regarding as being, for St. Paul's mind, independent of sacraments. The mystery is not a doctrine, it is an experience.

It is possible to exaggerate the significance of St. Paul's use of this terminology. It can, perhaps, be largely accounted for by its presence in the Septuagint and its use in later Judaism; phrases in the book of *Wisdom* like 'Wisdom is initiate into the knowledge of God,' and, in the Epistle of *James*, 'the wheel of nature' or 'of birth,' show how Mystery terminology could be used by writers who show little sign of sharing in Mystery religion. Again, some of the terminology was used by philosophers who had little or no connexion with the Mysteries, nor is it at all improbable that some of the words were used in ordinary life as well as in religious rites. None the less, these considerations do not seem adequately to account for the use of this phraseology in St. Paul. It is not only that we find Mystery words

[27] *Gal.* iii, *Eph.* iii and v.

[28] See P. Gardner, '*The Religious Experience of St. Paul*,' pp. 70-79.

but we sometimes find them in groups. There remains also the fact of their inevitable meaning for St. Paul's readers. There may indeed be an analogy between the use of these words by St. Paul and the modern use of the terminology of Evolution outside the science of biology. But if there is, what does the analogy mean? It is not the same thing to borrow the terminology of one science to elucidate the facts of another, as it is to express the theology of one religion in the very familiar language of other religions to which it is opposed. St. Paul's use of such language is intelligible enough if he thought of his religion as the true Mystery, the crown of other Mysteries. His use is also quite natural if he had found in Mystery language a valuable aid to the formulation of his own experience, or if he did not fully realize the danger of misunderstanding by those whose experiences, gained orginally, perhaps, in those very Mystery religions, had been, in Christianity, far less intense than or different from his own. The dangers were very real. Scholars like Mr. Williams admit that magical elements came into Christianity with the large influx of semi-converted heathen into the Church in the fourth and later centuries.[29] We may doubt if many of the Corinthian converts of St. Paul were much more than semi-converted. The first Epistle of Peter, a very Pauline letter, seems to be protesting against low views when it speaks of saving baptism as 'not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience towards God.' There is much in the Fourth Gospel which it is very possible, but perhaps not necessary, to interpret in the same way.

Nevertheless, to whatever extent St. Paul's presentation of Christianity, through contact with the Mysteries, may have been affected by them, the assimilation is far from complete. The historical and the ethical differences are the most prominent. The Mysteries were not all indifferent to the moral life, but, taken as a whole, it remains true that the stories of the mythical deities of the Mysteries would have to be treated with an elaborate use of symbolism to make them at all edifying. For the Mysteries, salvation was assured by the exact performance of ceremonies which gave an indelible character, but did not necessarily in-

[29] *Essays Catholic and Critical*, p. 395.

volve any corresponding change in moral life. No real moral teaching was ever associated with them. Again, the Mysteries were syncretistic and tolerant: for St. Paul, Christian and heathen mysteries are mutually exclusive. In the Apostle's language about the inner warfare of flesh and spirit, the resemblance to the Mysteries is more apparent than real; for them, the flesh hinders the contemplation of the divine; for him it leads to the vices which make impossible the moral life essential for one 'in Christ.' Similarly, his conception of fellowship in the sufferings of Christ is that it involves the acceptance by the will of that scale of values represented by the Cross. 'I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I suffered the loss of all things and do count them but refuse that I may gain Christ and be found in Him.' That is very different from the sensuously induced sentimental and ritual sympathy with a mythical Attis or Osiris. Even the outward rites in St. Paul and in the Mysteries are not identical. For both, baptism stands at the entrance to the religion; but in the little we know of Mystery meals the correspondence is not exact. If we may judge from the words of Clement and Firmicus Maternus, the sacred meal in the Attis cult was an initiatory rite, not a commemoration combined with an eschatological hope, and a means of communion for those already initiate.

Further, while St. Paul undoubtedly regarded Baptism and the Eucharist as efficacious sacraments, no picture of him as a compiler of a religion which was a conglomeration of really inconsistent elements is at all adequate to account either for his phenomenal activity and achievements, or for his permanent influence. At the basis of his life and all his thought there must have been, as manifestly there was, the ever-present memory of a revolutionizing experience. This would account for a deeper meaning in the rites of baptism and the supper which he found, in a simpler form, already existing in the Church. They do not take the fundamental place in his thought,[30] for his own deepest personal experience had been independent of them. He refers but once, in a speech in *Acts*, to his own Baptism, never to his experiences in the Eucharist, though he writes much of his reli-

[30] See above, p. 347.

gious experiences. He probably accepted them without question when he found them already in the Church, and turned them to good account in his missionary work. He undoubtedly employs much of the language and some of the ideas of the religions of his Hellenistic environment. I cannot see by what canons we can decide what proportion of this is due to outside influence, conscious or unconscious, and what proportion represents the rationalization, in the ordinary religious language of the day, of similar experiences and their satisfaction to those satisfied by the Mysteries.[31] Those who ask for a more definite conclusion must choose between guesses. They are asking more than the evidence can supply.

Thus we cannot deny that St. Paul attributed an objective value to sacraments, and thought that they, though not apart from faith, effected the results he associates with them. There is a possibility that his conception of their efficacy may have been, at times, rather more crude. He is not unwilling to use the practice of vicarious baptism, undertaken on behalf of the dead, as a support to his argument for the resurrection.[32] The practice was known to Tertullian, and it appears that substitutes were allowed in the Taurobolium. We can only regard it as a superstition. St. Paul does not definitely approve it: he certainly does not condemn it. So long as it was not actively unethical, judged by interims-ethical standards,[33] he probably cared little about it, while he cared everything for the resurrection. He thought the calamities of the Israelites were sent by God in punishment for their sins, and that the like punishment had fallen on those who had unworthily partaken of the Lord's Supper. Obviously, doctrine found in such contexts is not necessarily true, or to be accepted without criticism. It by no means follows that because Paul's sacramentalism was ethical, that it was therefore free from superstition. It is quite possible for a high standard of ethics to exist in close association with beliefs which are really superstitions, provided they are not known to be super-

[31] *cf.* Rashdall, *'The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology,'* p. 482.

[32] *I Cor.* xv, 29.

[33] In *I Cor.* xv that the Apostle's expectation of the speedy return of Christ is apparent. 'We shall not all sleep . . . the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'

stitions and are sincerely believed. It is no defence against a charge of superstition in theology to urge that it is ethical. No one denies the exalted morality inculcated by many Roman Catholic theologians, but that no more proves the truth than it proves the superstition of the theology of the Mass. The question is not one of morals, but one of science and philosophy.[34]

On the other hand, apart from Paul's reference to baptism for the dead, there is no justification for regarding his conception of sacraments as rites which work *ex opere operato*. We may say, if we will, that he would have explained their working on that line, but in fact he does not so explain it, and there are some indications that he would not have done so. There is no reason to suppose that he thought baptism, without faith, could effect anything even entrance into the Christian Church. There is no sufficient evidence that infant baptism was practised in his day. Statements that households were baptized cannot establish the fact of infant baptism. If it were the general practice to baptize infants, such statements would mean that infants were baptized; if it were not the general practice, they would mean that the eligible members of the household were baptized. When it is held that the rite of baptism effects any change in the nature of unconscious infants, or imparts to them any seed of divine life, there is a real departure from the ethical sacramentalism of St. Paul; where it is the practice to confirm young children, the departure is complete. In the same way, there is not a word in St. Paul's letters to indicate that he held a belief in any 'real and objective presence' of Christ in the bread and wine of the Eucharist, or that the elements would have any significance apart from the service of fellowship in which they were consumed. Nor are any such beliefs necessary to the most real experience of the presence of Christ in that sacred service, though, for those who can believe them, they may undoubtedly make the experience more emotionally intense. That the significance of the symbols would be less, or the rite invalid, if not consecrated by qualified persons using a definite formula there is not a hint in St. Paul, who, like the Synoptists, gives us no

[34] The doctrine of Transubstantiation is a philosophical doctrine, but it is based on an *a priori*, not on a scientific, theory of the constitution of matter.

words of consecration. Jewish Christians do not seem to have objected to St. Paul's sacramentalism;[34] there is no reason why they should have done so if they believed in Christ as risen, and knew the experience of the Spirit. They probably did not fully understand this side of St. Paul's thought, any more than Gentiles understood other parts of it. We should not forget that it is extremely improbable that St. Paul's Epistles are *representative* of the general thought of the Church of his day. Even in the Gospels and *Acts*, the extraordinary thing is not that they show Pauline influence, but that they show so little. It seems undeniable that during his lifetime St. Paul was chiefly important as a missionary Apostle and as a leader in Church policy. His theological fame is posthumous. If the doctrinal seed which he sowed grew and became a great tree, so that many of the superstitions of the decadent Roman world and subsequent Dark Ages lodged in the branches thereof, this result was much more due to the nature of the ground in which he planted the seed than to the seed itself.

St. Paul, and even the Jerusalem Church, could modify their beliefs and practices in face of new facts. Sacraments provided no problem to the age except an ethical problem to St. Paul. Just as he seems to have been unconscious of the problem of 'the good man without faith,' so he had not our experience of generations of Christians, bringing forth all the fruits of the Christian life, while rejecting accepted sacramental theology, and sometimes even the sacraments themselves. Had St. Paul known our experience there can be no doubt that he would have thought it more likely that the accepted theology was wrong, than that uncovenanted mercies existed on such a scale; or rather, he would have set about extending the covenant to include them. When the Jerusalem Christians heard, what they would not have thought possible, that Cornelius had received the Spirit, they said, 'Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.' They acknowledged the immediate implications, though a full realization was the result of a hard struggle.

[35] Mr. Williams (*Essays Catholic and Critical*, p. 399) seems to regard this fact as evidence that Paul's sacramentalism possessed the generally acknowledged sanction of the teaching of Jesus, on the ground that, had it not been so, Judaizers would have opposed it.

How the Sacraments work is, for us, insoluble.[35] Inasmuch as we have bodies and live in a material world, a sign which expresses a spiritual relation helps to bring it to pass. The most impenetrable mystery known to us is the interaction, or reciprocal action, of spirit and matter. The effectual working of Sacraments is part of that problem. We cannot explain the association of thought with movement in the matter of the brain. The problem therefore lies still unsolved at the very root of the thought which has propounded theories of its solution in respect of the Sacraments. It is therefore extremely unlikely that the true solution was known to St. Paul. If it was, he has certainly not revealed it to us, and mercifully he refrained from the promulgation of any theories. His sacramental teaching, inseparably connected with ethics, permeated by his passion for the Christian moral life, gives us a starting point for a spiritual and rational theology of the Sacraments which is one of the greatest practical needs of our time.

[36] The analogy (suggested by Dr. Gore, and approved by Mr. Williams, *op. cit.* p. 421) of human birth, 'whereby the creation of a new, unique and individual human personality supervenes upon the consummation of what, considered in itself, is a purely material process,' appears to me both crude and inexact. On the one hand, it suggests, as Mr. Williams seems to recognise, an *ex opere operato* working of Sacraments which neither he nor Bishop Gore would accept. On the other hand, what supervenes upon the material process is not a spiritual result, but another physical organism, like the parent organisms, which much later manifests the characteristics of personality, and in which the same mystery of the interaction of Spirit and matter is reproduced, but is not explained.

SACRAMENTS IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

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OF all the books of the New Testament, it is the Gospel according to St. John which presents the hardest problems to the interpreter. An extreme simplicity, not to say monotony, of style goes together with a baffling and allusive method which seldom allows the reader to feel satisfied that he has fully grasped his author's meaning. It is indeed true that simple believers have found themselves especially drawn to St. John, and this is weighty testimony to the Evangelist's steadfast hold upon elemental truths of the spiritual life. But he himself is not simple minded. The Church at the close of the first century was confronted with many complex problems. Of these the Evangelist is acutely conscious, and he is directly concerned to meet them. His interpreter in consequence must always have his eye upon the situation of the Church, so far as it can be known or divined, at the time when the Evangelist wrote. Then, again, the form of the work raises problems at every step. It is an account of the mission of Jesus Christ. But a little observation enables us to see that the author has no intention of giving us a treatment of the subject which conforms to historical standards ancient or modern. It is a free composition expressing the writer's convictions as to who Christ is and what He means to the Church and the world. Yet, in spite of this freedom in the treatment of history, it remains a cardinal principle with the Evangelist that the Logos historically became flesh and lived a real life. All these characteristics must be remembered and allowed for in examining the subject with which I am to deal—the place of sacramental ideas in the Gospel according to St. John.

The most obvious feature in the treatment of the Sacraments in *St. John* is negative. The Baptism of Jesus by John at the beginning of the ministry, and the distribution of the bread and wine at the Last Supper, with the accompanying words of Christ, are entirely omitted. This is the more remarkable inasmuch as the Evangelist lays emphasis upon John's testimony to the

descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove, while the account of the discourses spoken at the Last Supper takes up nearly a fifth part of the Gospel. We will return to these omissions later on. In the meantime we must notice that they are counterbalanced by the strongest sacramental language to be found in the New Testament:

> 'Amen, Amen, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God' (c. iii, 5).
>
> 'Amen, Amen, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day' (c. vi, 53, 54).

The second of these passages occurs in the discourse on the Bread of Life which follows the miracle of the feeding of the multitude. It has been variously interpreted both in ancient and in modern times. Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria and other patristic writers interpret the flesh and blood of the Eucharistic elements. 'Wherefore,' writes Chrysostom (*Hom. in Joann*, xlvi), 'this also hath Christ done, to lead us to a closer friendship, and to show His love for us; He hath given those who desire Him, not only to see Him, but even to touch and eat him and fix their teeth in His flesh and to embrace Him and satisfy all their love.' But this view was not universal in the ancient Church. Origen, allegorizing as his manner was, understands the flesh of the Son of Man to mean 'doctrines' (*Hom. in Num.*, xxiii; *Migne P.G.* xii, p. 752). Elsewhere he writes: 'We are said to drink the blood of Christ, not only in the use of the Sacraments, but also when we receive his words' (*Hom. in Num.* xvi; *Migne P.G.* xii, p. 701). The highly fanciful method by which Origen arrived at his interpretation of 'flesh' and 'blood' as equivalent to 'doctrine' need not detain us now. We will only note that his view is of a piece with his general depreciation of the material and the historical. St. Augustine, on the other hand, expounded eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man to mean fellowship with the Body of Christ, that is, the Church. Nothing in the context directly suggests this thought, but Augustine reads St. John in the light of St. Paul. The words, he argued, cannot refer to the reception of the Eucharistic elements because these do not necessarily impart life. Some receive them not to life, but to

destruction. 'He who does not abide in Christ, and in whom Christ does not abide, doubtless does not eat his flesh, nor drink his blood, although he eats and drinks the sacrament of so great a thing to his own judgment' (*Tract. in Joh.* xxvi, 18). Augustine's teaching on the Sacraments, like his teaching on the Church, is not entirely consistent, but the dominant thought is the distinction which appears in this quotation between the visible sign and the invisible *res* of a sacrament. Eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man is to be interpreted of the invisible *res*, not of the visible sign. Those who conceived of a sacrament on Augustinian lines as 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace' felt a natural disinclination to interpret *John* vi directly of the Eucharist, and Augustine's interpretation remained influential in the West, even when his sacramental teaching was in this respect largely neutralized by the doctrine of Transubstantiation. When the Reformers rejected the doctrine of Transubstantiation they naturally brought into prominence this side of Augustine's teaching, and, like Augustine, they rejected the Eucharistic interpretation of *John* vi which found favour with many, though not with all, Roman Catholic divines. Cranmer, for example, triumphantly appeals to Augustine in reply to Stephen Gardiner, who wished to argue from *John* vi as to the 'corporal manducation' of Christ's Body in the Eucharist.[2] From Archbishop Cranmer to Bishop Westcott the leading Anglican divines have concurred in disallowing the sacramental interpretation of the words in *St. John* about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man. Waterland, for example, in his great work on the Eucharist, argues that though *John* vi may be *applied* to the Eucharist, it is not to be *interpreted* of the Eucharist, and after a laborious and not always very convincing examination of the patristic exegesis, he finds 'nothing in the Fathers before about the beginning of the fifth century which can be justly thought *clear* and *determinate* in favour of oral manducation, as directly and primarily intended in *John* vi' (*Works*, vol. vii, p. 135).

[1] *An answer unto a crafty and sophistical cavillation devised by Stephen Gardiner against the true and godly doctrine of the most holy sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ,* by Thomas Cranmer (Parker Soc. ed., p. 26).

Before turning to the Gospel itself we shall do well to recall some canons of interpretation which had not yet appeared above the horizon when Waterland wrote in 1737, and which even Bishop Westcott failed fully to realise and to apply. It was assumed of old that Scripture was homogeneous, and that a difficulty in one book might be safely elucidated with the help of a clearer passage in another. If St. John's meaning were ambiguous, the ambiguity might be resolved by a passage from another Evangelist or St. Paul. Often this may be so, but we have learnt to be more wary than our predecessors. St. John wrote about half a century later than St. Paul, and perhaps a generation later than St. Mark. He is obviously influenced by the work both of St. Paul and of St. Mark, but we may not assume that his system of ideas is identical with that of his predecessors. Still less may we assume, as earlier interpreters inevitably assumed, that the teaching of *John* vi, as we read it now, is historically prior to the words at the Last Supper recorded in *St. Mark* as well as to the teaching of St. Paul. We must allow the Fourth Gospel to interpret itself in the light of the known conditions of the age in which it was written.

If we ask the question how the Evangelist would expect to be understood by his readers when he wrote the words about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man, there can be but one answer. What we know about the language and ideas associated with the Eucharist at the beginning of the second century renders it inevitable to suppose that St. John's readers would understand a direct reference to that rite. The Epistles of Ignatius, written about 115 A.D., show us that the Eucharistic bread was regarded as in some mysterious way actually being the flesh of Christ. Ignatius' *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* is full of warnings against docetic schismatics who refuse to confess that Christ was a 'bearer of flesh' (*Smyrn.* 5). These heretics, he says, 'abstain from Eucharist and prayer, because they allow not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins, and which the Father of his goodness raised up' (*ib.* 6). The elements remained bread and wine no doubt, but they were charged with some supernatural force which secured the communicant who fed upon them from corruption and death. Writing to the Ephesians, Ignatius speaks of the Eucharist as 'the medicine

of immortality, and the antidote that we should not die, but live for ever in Jesus Christ.'[2] We cannot mistake the resemblance in thought between these words, addressed to the very Church in which the Fourth Gospel was composed, and the sayings in *John* vi, 51, 54: 'If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever, and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world; . . . he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.'

It is certainly at first sight surprising that the Evangelist who gives us the discourses of Christ on the Comforter and the great prayer of ch. xvii should thus countenance a sacramental doctrine apparently so materialistic; but if we read ch. vi. as a whole we are helped to an explanation. The Evangelist does not rest in the popular belief. He states it, accepts it, and turns it. The sayings about the Eucharist stand neither at the beginning nor at the end of Christ's teaching on the Bread of Life, and to get at St. John's meaning we must follow the connexion. We are first given the story, which reaches back to the earliest traditions of the Galilean ministry, how the Lord, 'after he had given thanks' εὐχαριστήσας (v. 11; *cf.* v. 23) fed a multitude with five loaves. The miracle is a 'sign' which, for those who have eyes to see, corresponds to a spiritual truth which the Lord later expounds in the synagogue at Capernaum. There is food which perishes: there is also food which abides—the Bread of Life. 'My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.' 'I am the Bread of Life.' For twenty-five verses the discourse continues without one word to suggest that the bread is to be understood otherwise than figuratively. 'I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.' The same gift which is later said to accompany and follow the eating of the flesh of the Son of Man is, in v. 40, associated with 'beholding' the Son and 'believing' on him. 'This is the will of my Father, that every one who beholdeth the Son and believeth on him, may have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' All this is of a piece with the figurative language employed elsewhere in the Gospel: 'I am the Light of the world'; 'I am the good

[2] The words are perhaps a quotation from a form of the Eucharistic prayer. *Cf.* the Anaphora of Serapion, § 15; and Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl*, p. 257, n. 2.

shepherd'; 'I am the door.' But at verse 51 a new turn is given to the discourse: 'I am the living bread which is come down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever, *and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.*' From here to the end of the discourse in the synagogue (v. 58) the Eucharistic reference is clear. But the subject is not allowed to rest here. We are told that the disciples were perplexed at the words of Jesus. Jesus meets their perplexity by adumbrating a yet deeper mystery: 'Doth this offend you? If then ye see the Son of Man ascending up where he was before?' It has been suggested that this should be interpreted as an explanation of the previous difficulty rather than as the revelation of a new mystery: the exaltation of the Son of Man explains how it is possible for men to eat His flesh and drink His blood. This idea need not be excluded from the passage, but on the whole it is more natural to recall the words to Nicodemus: 'If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things.' There is a higher mystery than the Eucharist: the exaltation of the Son of Man. Christ then proceeds to interpret the previous saying about His flesh by explaining that the flesh in itself profits nothing. The life-giving force is the Spirit; and the sayings of the Word made flesh—they are spirit and they are life.

A review of chapter vi as a whole modifies the impression which we might receive from vv. 50-59 if read by themselves. Current language about the Eucharist is deliberately accepted. The Evangelist is anxious to justify and explain the sacramental rites of the Church. But he wishes to carry his readers beyond the rite to the inward and personal union with Christ which the rite at once symbolizes and mediates. The thought moves along rather different lines from what we find in St. Paul. St. Paul does not speak of eating the body of Christ; he speaks of eating the bread and being a sharer in Christ's body, and of drinking the cup and being a sharer in Christ's blood. This language lends itself more readily than the Johannine to the Augustinian theory of the sacraments. Both St. Paul and St. Augustine are acutely conscious of the problem of the unworthy receiver, but in *St. John* this problem is not raised. Nothing is said about the danger of incurring guilt through unworthy participation.

We are left with the positive affirmation that the flesh and blood of the Son of Man give life, and the explanation that the life comes, not from the flesh in itself, but from the Spirit of the exalted Son of Man.

We seem to find a similar attitude towards the sacrament of Baptism in the discourse with Nicodemus. There is the same unqualified statement of the Church's faith:

> 'Amen, Amen, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'

But the words which follow dwell upon the unseen operations of the Spirit. The water is quietly dropped.

We may now return to the remarkable omissions, which we noted at the outset, in the narratives of the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus at the beginning of His ministry and of the Last Supper at its close. We must not suppose that the Evangelist intended to cast doubts upon the historicity of the Baptism of Jesus by John, or upon the actions and words ascribed to Jesus at the Last Supper in the Synoptic Gospels. He presupposes his predecessors; he does not intend to supersede them. The omissions are no doubt dictated by the purpose which the Evangelist had in view, and that purpose was not historical accuracy. It would be consistent with the attitude towards sacraments which we seem to have discovered if the Evangelist felt a certain impropriety in the introduction of material elements at these two stages in his Gospel. It was not to be supposed that the descent of the spirit upon the Son of Man Himself was mediated by water. To prevent the possibility of this supposition the actual Baptism is omitted. 'And John testified saying I beheld the spirit descending as a dove from heaven, and it abode upon him; and I knew him not, but he who sent me to baptize in water, he said to me, He upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending and abiding on him, he it is who baptizes with holy spirit; and I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God.'[4] Again, we may observe that the discourses at and after the Last Supper differ in tone from those which occur earlier in the Gospel. In the main the Gospel down to chapter xii is concerned with the public mission of Jesus and the judg-

[3] Is Seeberg right in supposing that the evangelist associated the incarnation of the Logos with this event? Compare with this passage, v, 15 *supra*. *Festgabe*: *Adolf von Harnack*, p. 272 *f*.

ment which that mission brings about. The discourses are enigmatic and the acts symbolic. It is in this part of the Gospel that the great Sacraments of the Church are prophesied and expounded. From chapter xiii onwards the Gospel portrays the inner relationship between Jesus and His own, whom He loved and loved to the end. It may well be that the Evangelist felt that sacramental language and sacramental acts would be unfitting here, and that this is why we find, in place of the sacramental distribution of bread and wine, a direct act of menial service performed by the Master for His disciples.

I conclude with a word or two on the origins of this sacramental idea which we have found to hold an important, though not a dominant, place in the thought of the Fourth Evangelist.

The sacramental idea in a broad sense — the idea that spiritual renewal is mediated by participation in the material elements of a common rite—is natural and widespread. It was no new thought to the Graeco-Roman world that by eating and drinking sacred food communion might be established with a deity. In the Mysteries of Attis[5] and in those of Mithra[6] the initiates entered into communion with the god by partaking of sacramental food and drink. The parallel to the Christian Eucharist struck contemporaries: Justin declared that in the Mithraic sacrament the demons had parodied the Christian Eucharist. In modern times scholars such as Dieterich and Reitzenstein have been disposed to find the origin of the sacramental beliefs of the early Church in these and other mystery religions of the ancient world. The question is one which requires most cautious handling. The objections to supposing that Christians of the first century consciously borrowed from pagan cults are obvious and insuperable. It does not, however, follow from this that they were not uncónsciously affected by the religious ideas current around them. We may go further and say that Gentile converts would inevitably tend to interpret Christian rites along lines of thought to which they were already accustomed. Clearly we cannot rule out of court the possibility of influences from such quarters, and I think that most scholars

[4] Firmicus Maternas, *De errore prof. rel,* 18, 1; Hepding, *Attis seine Mythen u. sein Kult,* p. 177 *f.*

[5] Pliny H. N., xxx, 1, 6; Cumont *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra, i,* pp. 175 *f.*, 320 *f.*

would agree that sacramental conceptions such as those which appear in the Fourth Gospel are more readily intelligible among the semi-Greek, semi-Oriental population of Asia Minor than they would be on Palestinian soil. But, I repeat, we must be cautious. In his important work *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums* E. Meyer warns us against too rigid distinctions. He rejects Albert Eichorn's theory that in the Christian Eucharist an independent Gnostic-oriental conception of sacramental eating as a means to eternal life has coalesced with a Jewish idea of forgiveness of sins attached to the rite of the Breaking of the Bread—Eichorn himself allows that positive evidence to support this theory does not exist—and he gives it as his opinion that the sacramental conception has arisen independently within the borders of Christianity and may naturally be explained on the basis of the belief, common to all religions, of a mystic communion with the Godhead through the sacrificial meal.'[7] A strong argument in favour of looking primarily to Jewish and Christian sources may be derived from the close association of the Christian Eucharist with the Jewish Passover. It is impossible at the end of a paper to raise all the complicated problems connected with the date of the Crucifixion, the character of the Last Supper, and the reasons for the strange discrepancies between the Gospels on these points. For an interesting treatment of these questions I must refer you to Professor Bacon's chapter on Quartodecimanism in his work *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate*. Here we must confine ourselves to the Fourth Gospel and merely note the identification of Christ with the true Paschal victim which underlies the Passion narrative in *St. John*. This identification, which is already found in St. Paul half a century earlier, apparently as a commonplace of Christian thought, provides an important starting-point for Eucharistic doctrine. We must not, indeed, read into the Passover what was not there. If we were able to accept Beer's statement that 'the Paschal meal is a mystic meal which, working like a mysterious medicine, gives the participants immunity for a year from all dangers, unites them with one another, and at the same time with their God, Yahweh,'[8] then we might at once

[6] Vol. i, p. 180, n. 2.

[7] *Pĕsachim*, p. 100. Quoted Buchanan Gray, *Sacrifice in the Old Testament*, p. 381.

link up the Eucharistic beliefs of Ignatius with the Jewish Passover. But whatever may have been the prehistoric antecedents of the Passover, there is not the slightest evidence that Jews of the first century regarded the Passover in this light. The Passover, as Dr. Buchanan Gray has shown, was a solemn commemoration obligatory upon all Jews because prescribed by the Law; it was not a sacramental rite. Nevertheless it remains important for our purpose to notice that down to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 the eating of the Paschal victim which had previously been sacrificed in the Temple Courts remained the centre of this the greatest of the Jewish feasts. It was in the sacrifice of the Paschal victim that the early Church found a counterpart to the sacrificial death of Christ. It was an easy step to relate the early rite of the Breaking of the Bread with the feeding upon the Paschal victim. Dr. Buchanan Gray closes the last chapter of his book on *Sacrifice in the Old Testament* by saying that 'St. Paul and St. John, who speak of our Lord as a Paschal victim, do not bring this idea into relation with the Eucharist.' This seems to be too sweeping—at any rate so far as St. John is concerned. St. John does indeed insist, like the writer to the Hebrews, that the sacrifice upon the Cross was accomplished once for all (ch. xix, 30). There is no suggestion that the Eucharist repeats that sacrifice. But St. John seems to wish us to understand that in the Eucharist the faithful feed upon the true Paschal victim. That the Last Supper in *St. John* is not, as with the Synoptists, a Paschal meal is no argument against this, for St. John never connects the Eucharist with the Last Supper. On the other hand, he is careful to note that 'the Passover was at hand' when Jesus fed the multitude in Galilee: and the words of Christ, 'the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world,' clearly point forward to His death, and teach that the faithful will feed upon Him—the true Paschal Victim—in the Eucharist.

Given the identification of Christ with the true Paschal victim; given the rite of the Breaking of Bread at which Christ was personally, though not corporeally, present; and the transition to sacramental language and thought is not difficult, apart from the possible influence of pagan sacramental practice.

THE PATRISTIC DOCTRINES OF THE SACRAMENTS

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GREEK theology at its best has been marked by one characteristic, its Platonism. It is not surprising, therefore, that as the Patristic period is the only period in which the theology of the Greek-speaking Church can be said to have flourished, its thought was pre-eminently Platonist. From the Apologists of the middle of the second century to St. John of Damascus of the middle of the eighth, all the greater Eastern theologians were consciously or unconsciously under the influence of Plato; the only important exception was the Antiochene school of the fifth century, which the Church always regarded with suspicion, and consequently prevented its exercising any extensive influence in orthodox circles. It is true that Christian Platonism differed in some respects from what Plato would have taught; it was certainly nearer the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus. Not only was the religious element uppermost in it, but it tended to distrust the world of appearance in a way that Plato would not and could not have understood. And, like Neo-Platonism, it flourished most luxuriantly at Alexandria. Clement, Origen, Athanasius (though no philosopher), and Cyril were in many ways its chief exponents. But its influence was much wider. It spread throughout the East, and the thought of the Cappadocian Fathers, of Pseudo-Dionysius and of St. John of Damascus was equally, and hardly less explicitly, influenced by it.

In the West the history of thought in the Patristic period is less easy to systematize. For the Western mind is less interested in, and at times even distrustful of, religious speculation. No Eastern would have understood the implications which lay behind Tertullian's question: 'What has the Christian to do with the philosopher?' Until St. Augustine, the Latin Church can hardly be said to have produced a single great thinker. Not being philosophically minded, when the West attempted to

formulate theological doctrines they usually did so with considerable crudeness, and generally did so only at all when practical issues demanded it. Tertullian's views on the Trinity are a case in point. The philosopher can see in him only an amazing crudity of thought of which the result was practically Tritheism. Yet he rendered a great practical service to the development of theology. He supplied the phraseology and formulae in which Western thought on the subject was to find expression down to recent times; and, it would appear, even provided the word 'consubstantial,'[1] which the Eastern Church was glad to accept in its Greek form (*ὁμοούσιος*) when the question became a practical issue.

With St. Augustine, Latin thought took a new turn. Before his conversion he had been trained under the influence of Victorinus in Neo-Platonism, a fact the significance of which cannot be overestimated. Platonism was to gain a hold in the Christian theology of the West. Yet it was a new kind of Platonism. Wherein it differs from the corresponding philosophy of the East it is easier to feel than to formulate; but there is no doubt that the *cause* of the difference was chiefly due to the great genius of St. Augustine. The Easterns were mainly concerned in religion with how man could reach God, how he could become divine; for St. Augustine the emphasis was on how God could come into contact with man and care for him. Thus the central position which the concept of deification (*θεοποίησις*) occupied in the East was taken up in the Augustinian West by that of grace (*gratia*). Moreover the Platonism of the East was much more intellectual. The Eastern Fathers tended to intellectualize God and religion, and to equate God with the One of metaphysics. For St. Augustine God, and even His attributes are something intensely personal, and for him the Platonic ideas become God's thoughts. By this interpretation of Plato Augustine gave a powerful impress to a type of philosophy which proved admirably suited to the Latin *Weltanschauung* and created a new Platonism destined to dominate the whole of Western theology to a date far beyond the Patristic period. It

[1] On the history of the word, *cp.* J. F. Bethune-Baker: *The Meaning of Homoousios in the 'Constantinopolitan' Creed,* in Cambridge *Texts and Studies,* VII, i.

influence was paramount, at any rate down to St. Bonaventura; those who, like Aquinas, felt that they were freed from its bondage were ultimately hardly less under its sway; and the presuppositions which lay at the back of the philosophy of Descartes and the religious experience of John Henry Newman were equally those of Augustinian Platonism.

These preliminary remarks will have prepared us, at least in some measure, to understand the Patristic doctrine of the Sacraments. Theology is the attempt to formulate in intellectual categories the data of religious experience. The intellectual categories used are necessarily those prevalent in the age in which the formulation takes place, and the same experience will in different ages find expression in differing terms. It is to be expected, therefore, that the history of sacramental doctrine in the Fathers will be largely parallel to, and in fact determined by, the wider differences which we have just considered. This is found actually to be the case. There is one type of sacramental doctrine which develops in an unbroken line through the Eastern Fathers with little interruption, and hardly even the consciousness of growth. A second type is to be found in the pre-Augustinian West, in Tertullian, in Cyprian, and in Ambrose. And a third type takes its origin from St. Augustine, which, while it incorporated much of the older Western doctrine and used much of its terminology, was essentially a new departure. But we must not forget that such a classification, however useful, has its limitations. There are wide differences within these several groups of Patristic writers — differences of race and temperament, period and place, which necessitate exceptions to any scheme of grouping. Yet there does seem, in spite of such exceptions, a different *morphology*, if I may borrow this use of the word from the vocabulary of Oswald Spengler, characteristic of each group; and hence such a classification may not be altogether valueless.

One further preliminary remark may perhaps be allowed. If there is one thing which characterizes the Platonist it is his inability to be content with life in the sphere of appearance. He will strive at all costs to penetrate to the reality which lies behind the outward, to pass from things temporal to things eternal. Of the two parts of every Sacrament, the outward and the inward,

it is the latter alone which really concerns him. As a result we find in the Fathers, in so far as they were truly Platonist, little discussion of, or even apparent interest in, the actual signs themselves. Frequently what appear to be discordant views are held by the same writer, and it is useless to ask whether the greater Patristic thinker held transubstantiation or consubstantiation, receptionist or sacramentarian views. It is a peculiarly dangerous procedure to attempt to understand the Platonist by extracting individual expressions from his writings, especially on such a subject as the Sacraments. There are few doctrines for the support of which Origen, perhaps the most Platonist of the Greek Fathers, cannot be adduced. It is possible to understand the Platonist only as a whole; indeed, as a sometimes not too coherent whole.

The Sacrament which undoubtedly played the greatest part in the life of the early Church was the Eucharist. If the references to it in the ante-Nicene literature are not so abundant as the historian might have hoped, the fact is to a great extent counterbalanced by their being derived from widely separated parts of the Church. Justin Martyr (about 150 A.D.) is one of the few writers who gives a direct account of the Eucharist. In his first Apology[2] he describes it with a freedom from which the Fathers of the next century would have shrunk. His account of the rite and the doctrine underlying it may, in the absence of further extensive knowledge, be taken as typical for the second century. The service, he says, began with prayers, at the conclusion of which the brethren saluted one another with a kiss. There was then brought to the president[3]

> 'Bread and a cup of wine mixed with water[4]; and he, taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying

[2] *Apol.* i, 65-67.

[3] ὁ προεστῶς. Probably the use by Justin of this designation was determined by the wish to make himself better understood by the Emperor.

[4] Harnack, *Brod und Wasser, die eucharistischen Elemente bei Justin*, in TU, VII, ii (1891), maintains that Justin implies that water and not wine was used in the Eucharist, a practice known to be widespread among heretics. The references to wine in the present text of Justin are, he says, interpolations. His theory has not met with general acceptance.

Amen. . . . And when the president has given thanks and all the people have expressed their assent, those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion' (ch. 65).

In the next chapter, after stating that only the baptized may partake, Justin summarises what he conceives to be the nature of the Eucharist:

'For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the word of God, took both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the word of prayer,[5] and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation were nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks said, "This do ye in remembrance of me, this is my body"; and that after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, "This is my blood," and gave it to them alone. Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn' (ch. 66).

In a third chapter the account of the rite is repeated in substantially the same terms (ch. 67). The most important piece of further information is that the celebration appears to have been a weekly event.

These passages suffice to show that for Justin the consecrated elements were the flesh and blood of Christ. This belief was also shared by two other second century writers, Ignatius and Irenaeus, between whom he stands approximately midway. Both these afford interesting evidence since they not merely *assert* the doctrine of the actual presence of Christ in the Eucharist, but use it as the basis of further argument against not easily silenced opponents. Ignatius writes of the Docetists that

'They abstain from eucharist (εὐχαριστία) and prayer, because they allow not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins, and which the Father of His goodness raised up.'[6]

Irenaeus, in a passage too long to quote, correspondingly uses the presence of Christ in the Eucharist as an argument against

[5] δι' εὐχῆς λόγου. This may be translated either as in the text or 'by the prayer of the Logos.'

[6] *Ad. Smyrn.*, 6.

the Gnostics, and that in a two-fold manner. First, this presence is a guarantee that the Creator of the world is the Father of Christ, and not, as the Gnostics taught, a second God; and secondly, the fact that Christians partake of that Eucharistic food is a sufficient proof of the incorruptibility of their flesh.[7] Substantially the same argument occurs in Tertullian, of whom more later.

From the fourth century onwards the literature, both in the East and in the West, becomes much more abundant. For the rite itself there is not only such evidence as that of Bishop Serapion's Prayer Book, which actually dates from that century.[8] For, though the majority of them did not receive their final form till later, the conservatism which usually characterizes liturgical practice leaves little doubt that they were substantially the same in the fourth century. Especially would this be true of the Canon of the Mass,[9] which was regarded as the most sacred, and consequently the most unalterable, part of the rite. From the language and the liturgical details of the rites much evidence can be deduced concerning the doctrines held by those who used them. The majority of them continue to use the language of the theologians of earlier times and to identify the Eucharistic elements with the body and blood of Christ. What appears perhaps more surprising is that there is no unanimity among the rites as to when and how the consecration is effected. In most cases the Invocation of the Holy Spirit, technically known as the *Epiklesis*, is conceived as the central feature in the rite. Exceptionally, in Serapion's liturgy,[10] it is the invocation of the Logos. In the Roman Canon, on the other hand, only with difficulty can traces of even the existence of an Epiklesis be discovered, and the centre of emphasis has been transferred to the repetition by the consecrator of the Words of Institution.

[7] *Adv. Haer.*, IV, xviii, 4, 5.

[8] The Eastern liturgies have been carefully edited by F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, vol. i (Oxford, 1896). Vol. ii has not appeared.

[9] The Canon of the Mass is, of course, the central Eucharistic prayer. In our present Book of Common Prayer it is subdivided into the Prayer for the Church Militant, the Prayer of Consecration and the Prayer of Oblation.

[10] P. 63 (ed. J. Wordsworth). The same view appears to have been held by Athanasius, *PG.*, lxxvi, 2401.

Perhaps the most important new feature in the language of fourth century writers on the Eucharist is the introduction of phraseology about the 'conversion' of the elements. Older writers had been content to speak of the consecrated gifts as the body and blood of Christ, without concerning themselves with the process by which the elements became such. For them the question did not arise as to the moment in the service when the elements were consecrated. But in the fourth century this vagueness to a great extent ceased. The Eucharist tended to become more a matter of speculation. Thus Cyril of Jerusalem speaks of the elements being 'changed' (*μεταβάλλειν*)[11] and Gregory of Nyssa of their being 'transformed' (*μεταποιεῖν*; *μεταστοιχειοῦν*).[12] To the latter of these two writers, says Batiffol,[13] 'we owe a document about the Eucharist which is the first attempt at a rational presentation of the traditional eucharistic faith.' But we must be careful. If Gregory's faith was the traditional faith, the mode in which he formulated it was quite new, and, it may be added, not accepted in its details by his successors. It is developed in his Catechetical Oration, which, according to its editor, Dr. Srawley, may probably be dated 'in one of the years immediately following 383.'[14]

Man is composed of two elements (*διπλοῦν*), body and soul, both of which need salvation. The soul can be saved by faith, but not so the body. Just as to counteract the effect of a deadly poison another poison is needed, so too our sinful bodies can be redeemed only by another body. This body is none other than that of Christ Himself, since

> 'That body only which was the receptacle of the Deity received the grace of immortality.'

In answer to the objection how it is possible for so many myriads to partake of that one body (*τὸ ἓν ἐκεῖνο σῶμα*), Gregory uses a subtle argument, formulated in the terms of the current physiology. Its gist appears to be that

> 'Just . . . as in the case of ourselves . . . if a person sees bread, he also in a kind of way looks on a human body, for by the bread

[11] *Cat. Myst.*, iv, 2.
[12] *Cat. Orat.*, 37, where both words occur.
[13] *Etudes d'Histoire et de Théologie Positive*, 2me. Série (Paris, 1920), p. 393.
[14] J. H. Srawley, *The Catechetical Oration of Gregory of Nyssa*, p. xiv.

being within it (the body) the bread becomes it, so also in that other case, the body into which God entered, by partaking of the nourishment of bread, was, in a certain measure, the same with it; that nourishment changing itself into the nature of the body. Rightly, then,' he continues, 'do we believe that now also the bread which is consecrated by the Word of God is changed into the body of God the Word.' By this means God 'disseminates Himself in every believer through that flesh whose substance comes from bread and wine, blending Himself with the bodies of believers, to secure that by this union with the immortal, man too may be a sharer in incorruption.' [15]

Such, in outline, is Gregory of Nyssa's doctrine of the Eucharist. Like so many of the Greek Fathers for whom the aim of religion was redemption from death through the power of the Resurrection, he insists that the Eucharist is the means by which we rise to our true life. It is for him 'the extension of the Resurrection' rather than 'the extension of the Incarnation.' He uses almost the very words which Ignatius had used at the beginning of the second century, that the Eucharist is the medicine of immortality, the antidote which delivers from death (*φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν*).[16] Even to the present day, as Arseniew in his recently translated *Mysticism and the Eastern Church*[17] has emphasized, the thought of the Eastern Church tends to centre in the Resurrection.

If the details of Gregory's theory were not developed by his successors, its general outlook remained typical for the thinkers of orthodox Eastern theology. It dominated the Eucharistic doctrine of those writings whose author knew that pseudonymity of the right kind could commend even heresy to a professedly orthodox church. Dionysius the Areopagite is steeped in Platonic thought, as the following passage on the Eucharist clearly enough shows:

'The hierarch (that is, the celebrant of the mystic rites) . . . after he has received and given the thearchic communion ends with holy thanksgiving, the multitude having beheld only the divine symbols,[18] but he himself, being ever hierarchically uplifted by the thearchic Spirit in the purity of his godlike state in blessed and spiritual perceptions to the holy archetypes of the earthly rites.' [19]

St. John of Damascus, the Aquinas of the East, who is generally regarded as the last of the Fathers, treats of the

[15] *Cat. Orat.*, 37.
[16] *Ad Eph.*, 20.
[17] Eng. trans., S.C.M., 1926. Price 5/-.
[18] On this word see the quotation from Harnack below (p. 381).
[19] *De Eccl. Hier.*, III, ii.

Eucharist, as of most other things, in some detail. Like Gregory of Nyssa, he uses the phrase 'transmade' of the effect of the consecration on the elements and compares the physical process by which bread and wine are converted when eaten into the flesh and blood of the eater.[20] Yet he remains ultimately agnostic:

> 'The bread itself and the wine are changed into God's body and blood. But if you ask how this happens it is enough for you to know that it is through the Holy Ghost. And we know nothing further save that the Word of God is true, and energises, and is omnipotent, but the manner of this cannot be searched out.'[21]

We come now to the pre-Augustinian Latin West. Our most important evidence is from North Africa. Some have thought that Tertullian, the first Latin theologian, held a symbolic doctrine. He speaks of the Eucharistic bread as the 'figure of (Christ's) body' (*figura corporis*) and as 'representing His Body' (*panem quo ipsum corpus suum representat*).[22] But it is doubtful how far the words *figura* and *representare* imply such a view. While the latter word may mean simply 'to present again,' the former is probably identical in meaning with the Eastern ἀντίτυπον. In the oft-quoted words of Prof. Harnack:

> 'What we nowadays understand by "a symbol" is a thing which is not that which it represents; at that time "symbol" denoted a thing which, in some kind of way, really is what it signifies; but, on the other hand, according to the ideas of that period, the really heavenly element lay either in or behind the visible form without being identical with it.'[23]

Thus in his treatise against Marcion (iv, 40), Tertullian writes:

> 'Having taken the bread and given it to His disciples, He made it His own body by saying, "This is my body," that is, the figure of my body. A figure, however, there could not have been, unless there were first a veritable body.'

Like Irenaeus before him, Tertullian is arguing in this passage against the Gnostic Docetism on the basis of the Eucharistic presence.

[20] D. Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, i, 147, shows also the points of contact of St. John of Damascus' teaching with that of Ambrose and that of Macarius Magnes.

[21] *De Fide Orthod.*, iv, 13. This attitude is still characteristic of the East. Cp. Pullan, *Religion since the Reformation* (Bampton Lectures for 1922), pp. 204-206.

[22] *Adv. Marc.* iii, 19; i, 14.

[23] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, E.T., i, 144*f*. Cp. also Gore, *Dissertations on Subjects connected with the Incarnation*, 1896, pp. 308-312. The latter writer thinks that Tertullian 'believed the bread to be symbolically called the body of Christ because it "embodied" a presence and gift of His Spirit' (p. 311).

Cyprian carries on the tradition of Tertullian, with whose writings he shows considerable familiarity. He was pre-eminently a practical administrator rather than a thinker, and his contributions to Eucharistic theology are incidental. In the *De Lapsis*[24] he relates four miracles to illustrate the evil effects of unworthy communion. On one occasion, a child who had previously been fed with food offered to a heathen idol was unable to consume the Eucharistic elements. On another, a woman who received unworthily collapsed at the ceremony. On a third, a woman who attempted 'with unclean hands to open her box, in which was the holy (body) of the Lord, was deterred by fire rising from it from daring to touch it.' On a fourth, a man who approached unworthily found a cinder instead of the Eucharist in his hands. Cyprian, too, did much to foster the belief that the rite was sacrificial, and emphasized as none of his predecessors had done the sacrificial nature of the Christian priesthood. It is the *sacerdos Dei* who celebrates the *sacrificia divina.*

We must pass over Ambrose with merely mentioning that in his *De Mysteriis* we get more definite conversion language than in any of the earlier Latin writers.[25]

It remains to consider the Eucharistic doctrine of St. Augustine. Many treatises, both French and German, have been devoted to the attempt to understand the Eucharistic theology of the great Bishop of Hippo; in most cases it is possible to guess the conclusions of the scholar if his religious confession is known. Thus on one side we find Harnack and Loofs; on the other, Batiffol, Portalié and Karl Adam.[26] It is tempting for one who has not made a special study of the subject to take up a meditating view; indeed, some of the experts at least admit the evidence in St. Augustine of texts which point in two different directions, and St. Augustine himself wrote on one occasion :

[24] *De Lapsis,* 25, 26.

[25] In the *De Sacramentis,* which is ascribed to Ambrose, we get language which approximates to that later used in reference to the doctrine of transubstantiation. But this treatise is certainly not the work of Ambrose.

[26] A. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte,*[3] t. iii, pp. 143, 144; F. Loofs, Art. *Abendmahl* in PRE,[3] vol. i, pp. 61-63; P. Batiffol, *Etudes d'Histoire et de Théologie Positive,* 2me. Sér. (Paris, 1920), pp. 422-453; E. Portalié, Art. *Augustin* in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (Vacant et Mangenot), pp. 2418-2426; K. Adam, *Die Eucharistielehre des heiligen Augustinus* (Paderborn, 1908).

'There is no false doctrine with which there is not intermingled an element of truth.'[27]

But before attempting to say anything further on the Eucharist in particular in St. Augustine, we may turn to the wider question of his sacramental teaching in general, and so enter upon our treatment of the other sacraments of which we have hitherto taken no cognizance.

St. Augustine's theology was largely developed under the stress of three controversies. The first years after his conversion were devoted to the refutation of the Manichees, from which sect he had been converted to Christianity; in the next years he was concerned with the Donatists; and from 411 onwards with the Pelagians. For us, the second of these controversies is the important one. It led him to formulate in his own mind and in his writings a doctrine of the Sacraments and of sacramental grace from the influence of which, and, as some would say, the fetters of which, the Church has not yet emerged.[28]

When St. Augustine began his polemic against the Donatists —a polemic which ended only with their extinction—he was faced with no new schism. From the second decade of the fourth century Christianity in Africa had been rent by factions. Even the Donatists themselves were not united. The occasion of the schism was that Felix of Aptunga, who had handed up some of the sacred books during the Diocletian persecution, had consecrated a certain Caecilian to the see of Carthage. To admit the validity of such a consecration was thought by a schismatic party to involve the sacrifice of an important principle. And so the Donatist schism began. The point at issue was, in the familiar language of the title to the Twenty-sixth Article, Does the unworthiness of the minister hinder the effect of the Sacrament? The Donatists replied with a decisive Yes; the Catholics with an equally decisive No. The principle of the Donatists, in the words of their protagonist, Parmenian, was 'How can anyone give that which he does not possess?' (*Qui*

[27] Quest. evang., II, 40: '*Nulla porro falsa doctrina est quae non aliqua vera intermisceat.*'

[28] The difficulty of reconciling St. Augustine's doctrine of sacramental grace with his attitude in the Pelagian controversy has often been felt. It must not be forgotten that the former had been developed long before the Pelagian controversy had arisen.

non habet quod det, quomodo det?); that of the Catholics, 'He gives to whom the gift belongs' (*Ipse ergo qui dat, ipsius est quod datur*). These arguments had been used by both sides long before the time of Augustine, but he brought to bear upon the question a mind incomparably greater than any of his predecessors on either side of the controversy.

St. Augustine was faced with the difficulty of having to reconcile what appeared to be two contradictory theses:

1. His conception of the Church. St. Augustine had not merely been converted to Christianity. He had been converted to Catholic Christianity. We need but recall his famous words: 'I should not believe the Gospel, did not the authority of the Catholic Church compel me.'[29] There is little doubt that the personality of Ambrose did much to impress upon St. Augustine the grandeur of the Church. As Harnack has said, 'It was the royal priest who first opened Augustine's eyes to the authority and majesty of the Church'[30] and it was this idea of the Church which found its classic expression in the *De Civitate Dei*. For St. Augustine, therefore, there could be no question as to where the true Church was to be found. The fact of the apostolic succession—that was, communion with the Churches of those sees which were of apostolic origin—alone sufficed to decide.[31] And especially is he impressed with the extent of the Catholic Church; this is involved in the very meaning of the word *Catholica*, the designation of his communion which is most frequently on his lips.

2. The other thesis was that the Sacraments could be administered by those who were unworthy. Otherwise the Donatists were right in their main contention. The justification was the argument of Optatus which was mentioned above, that the Sacraments were not the gift of the minister but the gift of God. The minister was but the instrument in the hand of God. This rule applies equally in the case of Baptism, Ordination and the Eucharist.[32]

[29] *Cont. ep. Man.*, v, 6. [30] *History of Dogma*, E.T., vol. v, p. 48.
[31] For the meaning of the phrase 'Apostolic Succession' in Augustine, see Turner in *Essays in the Early History of the Church and Ministry*, ed. by Swete, pp. 193*f*. Cp. also Headlam, *Bampton Lectures;* the whole of lecture iv is important in this connection. Also cp. Batiffol, *Le Catholicisme de S.A.* i, 216*f*. [32] Batiffol, *op. cit.* i, 243*ff*.

Thus Augustine was lead to what might appear at first sight the inconsistent position that whereas the Catholic Church is alone of Divine institution and the home of grace, the Sacraments, which are the means whereby grace comes to man, are duly administered also outside that Church. The way out for Augustine was the separation of the *validity* and the *efficacy* of the Sacraments. There is the widest difference between simply 'possessing' (*habere*) and 'possessing profitably' (*salubriter, utiliter habere*). A sacrament duly administered outside the Church is valid, but never efficacious. Baptism and Orders, wherever administered, confer a *character indelebilis*—the idea, though not the phrase, is St. Augustine's—and these sacraments can never be repeated. Yet only within the sphere of the Church could they bring grace, since the Church is the home of charity; and

> 'He cannot have the charity (*caritatem*) of God who does not love the unity of God.'[33]

Moreover the heretics, with all their valid sacraments, could not be saved.

> 'Let us suppose someone, therefore, chaste, continent, free from covetousness, no idolater, hospitable, ministering to the needy, no man's enemy, not contentious, patient, quiet, jealous of none, envying none, sober, frugal, but a heretic; it is, of course, clear to all that for this one fault only, that he is a heretic, he will fail to inherit the Kingdom of God.'[34]

So far St. Augustine is as clear as could be desired. Difficulties arise when the attempt is made to discover what answers he would have given to many questions which claimed the attention of the Church at a later date. What, for example, constituted a sacrament for him? The word '*sacramentum*' had a long history behind it; and on the first occasion on which we find it used in connection with the Christian rites it appears to have had its original meaning of 'oath.'[35] By the Church herself it gradually came to be regarded as the equivalent of the Greek word μυστήριον—a word which had also had a long history[36]—and came to be restricted to certain definite rites. This

[33] *De Bapt.* iii, 21.
[34] *De Bapt.* iv., 25.
[35] Letter of Pliny to Trajan (*Ep.* 96).
[36] The discussion by J. A. Robinson, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, has come to be regarded as classical, pp. 234-240. But *cf.* the remarks of Mr. Bezzant, *supra*, p. 354.

restriction, however, does not seem to be earlier than the thirteenth century; for we find that in the twelfth century Hugh of St. Victor could still enumerate thirty *sacramenta*.[37] Prior to this much difference of opinion existed as to the use of the word. Thus Cyprian, when speaking of the seamless robe of Christ as typifying the unity of the Church, wrote:

> 'By the sacrament and sign (*sacramento et signo*) of his garment, he has declared the unity of the Church.'[38]

The exact significance of the word *sacramentum* in St. Augustine is not easily determined. Thus we read in one passage, which appears to be giving a definition: 'The word approaches the element and makes it a sacrament';[39] or again, 'The sacrament is one thing, the virtue of the sacrament is another.'[40] It is clear that St. Augustine distinguished between the *sacramentum* and the *res* (or *virtus*) *sacramenti*. Whatever may be the precise implication of expressions of this nature, there is no doubt that the term was applied not only to the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist; for in one place he speaks of 'the other sacraments' after having referred to those two immediately before.[41]

As regards the Eucharist, which he describes as the 'sacrament of the Lord's table,'[42] these two passages suffice to convey some impression as to his teaching. In the one he writes that the Eucharistic flesh is not like the flesh of a carcase which has been sold in the shambles as butcher's meat.[43] In the other he writes:

> 'For he took from the earth earth, because flesh is from the earth, and he received flesh from the flesh of Mary. And because in that very flesh he walked here and gave that very flesh to be eaten by us for salvation, no one eats of that flesh unless he has first adored . . . and not only do we not sin by adoring, but we sin if we do not adore.'[44]

I venture at this point, for the sake of affording a connecting link with the paper which is to follow, to digress beyond the

[37] Otto of Bamberg appears to have first held that there were *seven* sacraments. *Cp.* Goethe, *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, part ii, book 7.
[38] *De Unitate Ecclesiae*, 7.
[39] *In Ioan. tract.*, lxxx, 3.
[40] *Ibid.*, xxvi, 11.
[41] *PL*, xxxvii, col. 1343.
[42] *Sermon* ccxxvii.
[43] *In Ioan. tract.*, xxvii, 3.
[44] *Enarr. in Psalm*, xcviii, 9.

limits of the Patristic period. A controversy, in which the names of Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus figured prominently, arose in the ninth century on the nature of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Once the question had been raised, what had since the second century been universally accepted became a burning issue; and an explanation was needed by the orthodox to reconcile the absence of any visible change in the elements at the moment of consecration with their assertion that such a change takes place. A philosophy was employed in which the categories of *substance* and *accident* played an important part. Every perceptible object was composed of two parts—its underlying substance and its sensible accidents. In the case of bread, for example, the accidents would include such things as its whiteness, its shape, its softness, its taste, its weight, and so on. Uniting all the accidents was an underlying *substance*, which lay beyond the reach of all sensible perception, and the *essential* element in the constitution of bread was the *substance* bread. Now transubstantiation, which explained the Eucharist in the terms of this philosophy, maintained that by the consecration of the elements the substance of the bread and wine were changed into the body and blood of Christ. The accidents of bread and wine remained unchanged. This was the somewhat ingenious theory which the Roman Church formally defined at the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 A.D., and to which she remains permanently committed. To such a theory natural science can have nothing to say, and the statement sometimes made that the Roman doctrine of the Eucharist is untenable because scientific experiment is unable to detect any difference between the consecrated and the unconsecrated species is certainly untrue. For, on the theory of transubstantiation, the accidents (with which alone natural science is concerned) remain unchanged. It is for the *philosopher* to accept or reject this doctrine; if it is too much to describe the philosophy which underlies it as obsolete—for philosophies seldom die—it is at least undeniable that the categories of substance and accident are not at present in vogue in philosophic thought.

For the earlier history of the Sacrament of Baptism we are particularly well informed as far as the West is concerned. The authorities are substantially the same as for the Eucharist. At

the end of the second, or beginning of the third, century Tertullian wrote a treatise devoted solely to the subject, the *De Baptismo*. There is much in this treatise which it is tempting to quote, for it sheds much light on the doctrine and practice of the Church at this date. He first discusses at length, in typical scholastic manner, the peculiar suitability of water as the means of entrance into the Church. Baptism, he continues, is *into* (not *in*) the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. On this point he appears to be alone, for the Revisers of the New Testament are now generally agreed to have been misled by a false pedantry in their correction of *Matt.* xxviii, 19, to 'baptizing them *into* the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'[45] After the baptism, the candidate is 'thoroughly anointed with a blessed unction,' and hands are laid upon him with the invocation of the Holy Spirit. Two chapters (11 and 14) treat of subjects which have a particularly modern ring about them. Here Tertullian attempts to answer two objections to the practice, the one that the Lord did not baptize, the other that St. Paul professed that he had been sent, not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel. Chapter 16 is also interesting. The blood which in addition to the water came out from the side of Christ typifies 'the baptism which both stands in lieu of the fontal bathing (*lavacrum*) when that has not been received, and restores it when lost.' He is referring here, of course, to martyrdom for the faith. The rightful minister of baptism, as too in Ignatius, is the bishop, though, with the bishop's authority, presbyters and deacons, and even laymen (but not laywomen) may baptize. Laymen, however, should do so with due reverence and modesty, for 'emulation of the episcopal office is the mother of schisms' (ch. 17). The most suitable times for the performance of the rite are Easter and Pentecost; yet 'every hour, every time, is apt for baptism; if there is a difference in the *solemnity*, in the *grace* distinction there is none.'

Cyprian, like St. Augustine after him, was led to develop his views on baptism largely as the result of controversy. It is noteworthy in this connection that he took up the opposite position to that of St. Augustine on the validity of heretical baptism. Those who had received baptism from heretics had not really

[45] *cp.* Armitage Robinson in the *J.T.S.*, VII (Jan., 1906).

been baptized at all; he even says in one place that such a baptismal birth bears sons not to God, but to the devil;[46] those who had received such baptism could enter the Church only by again submitting themselves to the rite. In one passage in the *De Gratia Dei* he describes baptism in terms strongly reminiscent of the initiation of Lucian, which Professor Gardner described to us in some detail on Tuesday evening:

> 'As soon as by help of the water of birth,' he writes, 'the stains of my former life were wiped away, and calm pure light from on high was shed upon my heart, now cleansed; and as soon as I had drunk in the Spirit from heaven, and a second birth had restored me and made me a new man; forthwith, in marvellous wise, what had been doubtful received assurance, what had been dark was illumined; a way was opened out for what before seemed difficult, what was thought impossible could be done; what had been born of the flesh and lived before in bondage to its pleasures confessed that it was of the earth, and what the Holy Spirit now quickened in me began to be God's own.'[47]

Elsewhere he describes Baptism as an Illumination, and points out the parallel between it and the pagan mysteries.

Up to the present our considerations have been solely—in intention at least—historical. But it is, I believe, the purpose of this Conference to be constructive, so perhaps it will be expected that I should conclude with a few remarks on the theological significance of the period which we have been considering. That is my only excuse for such presumption.

We are separated from the last of the Fathers by a period of somewhat over a thousand years; and much that has happened in the intervening period in the history of thought renders it impossible for those who believe in the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Church to go back to thinkers of the first eight centuries for their doctrines. Especially is this true in the case of the Eucharist, where there has been a far greater expenditure of thought than in the case of the other sacraments. The extent to which this development has proceeded, papers which are to follow will doubtless indicate. Transubstantiation, Consubstantiation, Receptionism were formulated, but as I said earlier, they were doctrines unknown to the Fathers; and one at least of them was bound up with Aristotelian distinctions of which the

[46] *De Unitate Ecclesiae*, 11.
[47] *De Gratia Dei*, 4.

Church of the Patristic age probably knew nothing and to which it was certainly indifferent.

But there is another side to the picture. The Church of England—at least in ideal—is nearer the Greek Fathers than any other communion in existence in Western Christendom. This fact is to a great extent the result of the peculiar course which the Reformation took in our country. Our scholars at that time were Humanists as well as theologians; and in consequence we were saved from developing a scholasticism such as was the immediate outcome of the Reformation in Germany, or tying ourselves down to an already existing scholasticism as did the Tridentine and post-Tridentine Church of Rome. There is a fact which must never be overlooked—a fact which has been recently emphasized by Professor Clement Webb in his book, *A Century of Anglican Theology* (four lectures originally published in the *Modern Churchman*); but by no one more strongly than by the Dean of St. Paul's. It is that English theology has always been deeply imbued with the Platonic Greek spirit, in which there has been an unconscious bond of union between the most differing parties in the Church.

The constructive theologian, if he is to avoid his greatest peril, fanciful theologizing, must have his eyes intent upon the past as well as on the future. We may, then, as Englishmen hope that, if the spirit of Plato is still alive in our midst, the Greek Fathers, with all their limitations, will have at least something, and perhaps a good deal, to say to us. We have seen the breadth of view with which their doctrines were characterized, and it may be that this very breadth of view is instructive. As long as the religious man has his attention properly directed to the inner reality, there is room for wide differences about the outward symbols, for it is not these that ultimately matter. Such an attitude may seem to the scholastically minded theologian unsatisfying, and to the ecclesiastical statesman seeking a way out of our present controversies insufficient as the basis of action. But it may be that which most accords with the genius of the English Church.

THE SACRAMENTALISM OF AQUINAS

By the Venerable Archdeacon A. L. Lilley.

THE primary task of the historian of dogma is to describe the intellectual processes by which the definitions that have acquired authority in the sphere of religion have been reached. But he is not likely to have much success even in the fulfilment of that task unless he feels and can make his readers feel the exact importance for religion itself of the intellectual problems and their solutions which he has to chronicle.

I propose to define religion as man's spiritual apprehension of Reality, his apprehension of it with the wholeness of his nature; and theology I propose to define as the exclusively mental ordering of what has been thus immediately apprehended. If these definitions be accepted as even approximately adequate, then we can see that every theological problem must have a directly religious significance, and that every solution of it has validity in proportion as it serves to make the strictly religious apprehension of Reality clearer and more profound.

With this general consideration in view we may be prepared, I think, to recognize the truth of two facts which the older theology, with its purely static view of Revelation, did not and could not so easily recognise. One is that the solutions of the problems with which theology is confronted are always provisional, and that they are valid only because and in so far as they are provisional. The classical Christian theology chafed at obstruction or delay in the formulation of truth because it was so sure that truth in its completeness had been once and for all revealed by the Supreme Truth. Its ideal was the definite fixation of truth in a statement henceforward inviolable. For us this ideal of the fixation of truth is not only an illusion, but also, and especially in the sphere of religion, the most dangerous of illusions. And the second fact is a consequence of this. It is that the theology of the past seems to us not only more interesting but more instructive when it is dealing with questions which were not then settled than when it merely records and justifies solutions which had already become authoritative.

This, as it seems to me, is specially true of the mediaeval treatment of the doctrine of the Sacraments. With the authoritative decisions of the Fourth Lateran Council the dispute as to the nature and method of the Divine Presence in the Eucharist had come to an end. The defence of the doctrine of Transubstantiation was henceforward purely academic. And nowhere perhaps are the peculiar intellectual force and originality of St. Thomas less apparent than in his treatment of this question. It is not merely that it is a question in the discussion of which he was peculiarly embarrassed by the strict requirements of his Aristotelian doctrine. It is simply that the question was no longer an open one. If there is one point in his discussion of it where his native intellectual force and courage unmistakably break through, it is when he abandons all intellectual attempts to justify the continued existence of accidents without the substance to which they belong and admits that such existence is simply miraculous.

But the impression which the Angelic Doctor leaves upon us when he comes to deal with a question which was still open—*viz.*, the nature and method of operation of sacramental grace—is very different. Here he strikes down to the very roots of religion and of religion as experience, *i.e.*, as in some sort a continuing revelation. I am far from desiring to imply that St. Thomas did not appreciate the religious value of the doctrine of Transubstantiation. It was, indeed, because of his intense appreciation of the religious value which it enshrined, no less than because of its now binding authority, that he laboured so hard in its intellectual defence. But at least for St. Thomas the religious import of that doctrine had been safeguarded by the Lateran decree. It was otherwise with the question of sacramental grace. Here the religious genius of St. Thomas was to open out avenues of speculation which the Roman schools are still engaged in exploring.

It is impossible in a brief paper like this to do more than indicate in barest outline St. Thomas's treatment of this question. First of all, what is the need and what the nature of grace in general? The unchallenged authority of St. Augustine in the Christian schools of the West had given an almost sacrosanct character to even his most doubtful opinions. It was

therefore impossible to challenge directly his doctrine of the absolute moral and spiritual impotence to which man had been reduced by the Fall. In his fallen state man was incapable of the faintest desire for good or faith in God. No slightest movement of such faith or desire could stir in him save as the result of an act of God's free unmerited favour towards him. The religious value of such a doctrine is apparent, indeed its supreme religious value. It presses the sublime truth that God is and must be beforehand with man in every least Godward movement of man's nature, and further that man's nature though corrupted is still capable of receiving God and still needs God as its only complete satisfaction. Even in his dourest picturing of man's fallen state Augustine never forgets that majestic certainty of his earlier years: 'Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee.' But his theology hardened into something very like untruth what was so magnificently true in the soul's immediate experience of its own actual unworthiness and remoteness from God. Now, impossible as it was for the later theology to challenge openly the opinions of the greatest of the Western Fathers on a matter so important, it had nevertheless done much during the succeeding centuries to abate their rigour. And St. Thomas did more perhaps than any of his predecessors to claim all that could possibly be claimed, in face of the Augustinian doctrine, for the fallen nature of man as still bearing traces of the Divine image. He replaced the Augustinian conceptions of grace and sin, in which sin had virtually destroyed the true nature of man and grace miraculously restored it, by the conceptions of the natural and supernatural, in which the natural had still a kind of yearning or nisus towards the supreme good, which however only the grace of the supernatural order could satisfy and fulfil. In any case grace was as necessary as in the Augustinian system for man's approach to God. God was still necessarily beforehand with man in every movement of his nature towards God. And grace therefore was and could be nothing less than God's impartation of His own nature to man. It was no exterior gift, no magical communication of an alien power. The special gifts and powers which flowed from grace were but various forms and expressions of the one authentic Divine Nature which in grace was communi-

cated to man, and communicated to him in virtue of a certain natural power to receive and desire it which still inhered in his fallen nature.

If such, then, were the need and the nature of grace, it was not difficult to determine its effect. That effect must be the perfecting of the soul's essence in so far as it is possessed of a certain likeness to the Divine being. Perfect assimilation of the soul to God is the only sufficient term of man's salvation. And that assimilation can only be attained through grace, through the act by which God imparts His own nature to the soul. The growing measure of that assimilation is and must always be a growth *in* grace.

Now it will be seen that the resolution of all these questions must have a direct bearing on the further question of the nature of the means or instruments of grace. If grace is an impartation of the Divine nature, and if only the impartation of that nature can procure the effect which it is the purpose of grace to procure, *viz.*, the perfecting of man's nature, it is clear that the immediate cause of grace must be either God Himself or some secondary instrument in closest association with Him. Suffice it to say for the moment that, in the view of St. Thomas and of all scholastic theology with him, that secondary instrument was the suffering humanity of Christ, the *Passio Christi*. The Passion of Christ did indeed by its own merit and efficacy procure man's salvation, but it did so as an instrument of the Divine grace.

Now at last we are prepared for an understanding of St. Thomas's discussion of the nature and operation of sacramental grace. But even now we have to keep in mind certain essential distinctions. As a sacrament is the sensible sign of an inward grace, we may in speaking of any sacrament be referring to the outward and visible sign only, or only to the inward reality of which it is a sign, or to both taken together in the vital and vitalizing operation of their unity. When the Schoolmen use the term *sacramentum* they wish merely to designate the outward sign. The inward reality to which the sign points, taken in its isolation, they describe as the *res* of the sacrament. And the whole sacrament in its operative integrity they call the *res et sacramentum*. Now it is clear that the only concrete reality here for the human spirit is the *res et sacramentum*, the reality of the

Divine assistance which is mediated to the spirit through the sign, *and* the sign which mediates it through the senses, taken in their vital connection and unity. The intellect may and must distinguish between the sign and the thing signified, the *sacramentum* and the *res*, but as thus distinguished they are mere intellectual abstractions. For those who receive the sacrament, for the religious sense apprehending reality along that particular channel, they cannot exist apart. Now if we are to do justice to the Schoolmen's doctrine of the sacraments we must never lose sight of the fact that they are intellectualizing a religious experience. Their business, as they conceived it, was to make clear to the intellect and by a strictly intellectual process what was implied in certain Divinely-appointed methods of God's self-communication to man. Seen from that angle, it is clear that in the operative sacrament, in its spiritual concreteness as *res et sacramentum*, the sign must be itself efficacious. It must in some sense contain and confer the grace of the sacrament. But in what sense can this be asserted? For it is strictly inconceivable that an object of sense can be the immediate cause of a spiritual effect. So strongly was the difficulty felt by the mediaeval theologians that St. Thomas's great contemporary, the Seraphic Doctor, St. Bonaventure, while he could not deny that sacraments were the cause of grace, yet taught that they were only occasional causes, *i.e.*, that they were the Divinely-appointed occasions upon which God had promised to confer certain graces, and without which there was no assurance of their being conferred. The sacraments in his view were not the true causes of grace, not *verae causae*, but only *causae sine quibus non*. For St. Thomas, on the other hand, the sacraments were real causes, not of grace itself, but of a disposition to receive it and which enabled its reception. They prepared the soul to receive grace by a certain enrichment and adornment as it were of its nature.

Now the motive of all these subtle distinctions was a finely religious one, an almost fastidious jealousy for the recognition of grace as never anything less than God's self-impartation to man. God was the sole source, the only immediate cause, of grace. But clearly He could use certain sufficient instruments of His self-impartation, and He could directly forge, as it were, such instruments. A homely illustration, such as St. Thomas

delights in, will serve to distinguish the nature of the instruments which God uses to confer His grace. A man's hand or arm is the instrument of his will. So is the axe in the hand of the carpenter. But it is the man himself, the living movement of his will, that is throughout the principal agent in whatever is wrought by the hand or by the axe. Neither works its effect save as moved by the power which resides in the special purpose and intention of man. But there is a further distinction, that between the hand and the axe. They are both instrumental causes of the effect to which they contribute, say, the making of a table. But the hand is of a higher instrumental order than the axe. For the former is a part of the total living organism informed by the man's will which is the sole principal cause of the table, while the latter is an instrument shaped by man for a special purpose. The former is an *instrumentum conjunctum*, an instrument in closest living connection with the principal cause; the latter an *instrumentum separatum*, an instrument separate from the principal cause and operative only as moved by it.

Now God is the sole principal efficient cause of grace. But He uses also certain instrumental causes, the meritorious suffering of Christ and the sacraments. The *Passio Christi*, the suffering of the Divine humanity, is an *instrumentum conjunctum*. It derives its virtue, *i.e.*, its merit and saving power, from the living association of Christ's humanity with His Divinity. As God, Jesus Christ is the principal cause of grace. As man suffering unto death, He is only the instrumental cause. The sacraments are also instrumental causes, but it is as separate instruments appointed by God for that special purpose that they have their efficacy. It is clear that throughout St. Thomas is jealously concerned to preserve, on the one hand, the conception of the sacraments as efficacious signs of grace; on the other, the conception of grace as never anything less than God's actual self-impartation to the soul. If therefore he definitely rejects the occasionalism of St. Bonaventure as insufficient for the conception of a sacrament as a real cause of grace, he hesitates also to admit that it can be grace in the full sense which is conferred by the sacraments. Here, however, his authority was not sufficient to prevent the development of the full logic of his implications. If the sacraments as separate instruments of Divine

appointment were capable of conferring any spiritual gift, why should it not be the saving effects of grace itself just as much as a disposition or title to receive them? His successors, almost I think without exception, asserted without any reserve the grace-conferring nature of the sacraments until it was at last confirmed as the authoritative teaching of the Church by formal decree of the Tridentine Council. By decree of the Seventh Session of that Council it was affirmed that the sacraments contain the grace which they signify and confer it upon those who present no obstacle to its reception.

The controversy, however, was by no means at an end. The Tridentine formula was not competent, perhaps it was not designed, to arrest controversy among those who admitted that sacraments were in any sense a cause of grace. Even the father of occasionalism, St. Bonaventure himself, was able to use quite naturally a form of expression practically identical with that of the conciliar decree of two centuries after his time. The sacraments of the New Law, he says in his *Breviloquium*, 'contain within themselves the healing truth and grace which they present, and confer what they promise.' But even if it were universally admitted that the sacraments were true causes of grace, the question still remained—In what way were they causes? Was their causality, as the Schoolmen put it, physical or was it moral? Did it belong to the physical or to the moral order? That is to say, did God use the sacraments as the instruments of His grace in such a way that when duly celebrated—*i.e.*, when the Divinely-appointed signs and the Divinely-appointed words of their consecration were used by the Divinely-appointed ministers—they did by their immediate physical contact confer grace upon those who received them with the proper dispositions? Or did, on the contrary, the causality of the sacraments belong to the moral order? Were they not rather instruments which moved or entreated God to give His grace effectively and infallibly to the worthy receiver? Ever since the time of St. Thomas these opinions have divided the Roman schools, and the controversy yet remains unsettled. St. Thomas is the great protagonist of the theory of physical causality, and that opinion has been zealously defended by the Thomists and by the great Jesuit theologian Suarez. The Scotists, followed by a host of

later theologians, have as zealously defended the theory of moral causality. Now here again it will be apparent that the motive of controversy lies in a jealous regard for what we would call religious or, more correctly perhaps, spiritual values. The difficulty was one which Christian theology especially, with its profoundly spiritual note, was bound to feel and has in fact always felt. It was the difficulty of admitting that anything material could, even instrumentally, produce a spiritual effect. St. Thomas was perhaps able to maintain the theory of physical causality the more easily that he had, as we have seen, reduced the effect of the sacrament to that of a mere disposition or title to grace. The Thomists, however, his theological heirs, had not that means of escape from the difficulty. They accepted the prevailing view that the sacraments were real causes of grace and not merely of a disposition to it, and had therefore to fall back for their defence of physical causality upon other arguments of the Master which were not wanting in a penetrating, even profound, religious insight.

It must always be remembered that the Divine appointment, whether explicit or implicit, of the sacraments was for the mediaeval theologians a datum of Revelation, and therefore beyond all possibility of question. None the less the wonder remained that God should have chosen material things to be the instruments of His grace. That fact, though humbly accepted by faith, yet remained a perpetual challenge to the intellect. There was nothing which the traditional Christian theology held more firmly than that only spirit could act upon spirit. But here in the sacraments God had actually chosen material things to be the instruments of spiritual effects. How explain such a mystery? Now St. Thomas could not from the point of view of a Christian theologian of his age deny, and certainly had no wish to deny, that it was *normally* impossible for a spiritual effect to be produced by a material cause. He had therefore perforce to fall back upon the theory of miracle as the only sufficient explanation of the spiritual efficacy of the sacraments. But he nevertheless saw satisfactory reasons why God should have chosen to work this miracle. First of all, the Divine Providence orders everything suitably to the conditions of the objects of its care. But man being an incorporate spirit,

spirit acting through a body, the Divine wisdom suitably provided aids to man's salvation under the form of bodily and sensible signs. Secondly, man in his fallen state had subjected himself by sin to bodily things. It was therefore again fitting that God should employ bodily things to convey to man the medicine by which he might be cured. For even if it were possible for spiritual things to be presented to man in their naked reality, he could not, subjected as he had become to bodily appetite, fix his mind with sufficient attention upon them. And thirdly, man's habitual action is bodily. It was therefore fitting that certain bodily actions should be proposed to him in the sacraments which were designed to give him power against those acts of sin which he had committed in and through the body. St. Thomas thus, as it seems to me, prepared the way for a mitigation of the too exclusive spirituality of the old theology and for the modern recognition of the quite real and legitimate part which body plays in the development of the life of spirit. He could never indeed have said with the poet of our youth,

> 'Nor soul helps flesh now more than flesh helps soul,'

but he could at least recognise that there was in the sacraments an interaction of body and spirit which put out of court all objection founded on a narrow and literal interpretation of the text 'Bodily exercise profiteth little.'

But notwithstanding the imperious and apparently irresistible demands of the universally-accepted formula, 'The sacraments contain and confer grace,' the Scotist theory of their moral causality has on the whole prevailed with later theologians against even the great authority of St. Thomas. In vain have the Thomists urged that that theory deprives the sacraments of all real grace-conferring power, that it reserves that power to God not only as original cause but as sole efficient cause, and that it therefore reinstates in another form the discarded theory of occasionalism, or at most makes of the sacraments an acted prayer. Against such objections the now considerable majority of Roman theologians urge in their turn the difficulty of admitting in material signs an inherent power of acting upon spirit. They acknowledge fully the instrumental character of the sacraments in causing grace. That they must acknowledge because

it is a datum of Revelation. But their instrumentality belongs to the moral, not the physical order. Through them the meritorious sufferings of Christ plead for the sinner with such power that he infallibly receives grace through them. But they do not in virtue, as it were, of their immediate physical contact confer that grace which they do in fact confer as moral instruments.

I may perhaps be permitted to add as a kind of footnote to the history of this protracted controversy that in our own day still another theory of the manner in which the sacraments are a cause of grace has obtained considerable favour and support. The Jesuit theologian, Father Billot of the Roman College, has revived St. Thomas's contention that the sacraments are a cause not of grace itself but of a disposition or title to grace, but holds that they produce that disposition neither physically nor morally but, as he puts it, imperatively. That is, they declare or manifest the Divine intention to confer spiritual benefits through them, and that manifestation of God's intention through the sacraments is of itself a title exigent, as the theologians term it, of grace.

I think we may all feel that the guiding motive of this controversy is not purely or even mainly intellectual, but throughout essentially and even profoundly religious. If sacraments are anything more than the marks which distinguish Christian believers from unbelievers, or than signs pointing, as it were from a distance, to the grace which is really received through and on account of something else, say of justifying faith—and all Christians at all times, whatever their theory of the sacraments, have in practice regarded them as something more—then it seems to me that the Scholastic attempt to define their nature was neither inadequate nor unworthy. And above all the Scholastic discussion of their efficacy as means or instruments of grace took full account of the difficulties, whether of ascribing to material causes spiritual effects or of ascribing to anything less than God His power of conferring the gift of Himself in grace. The Scholastic doctrine of the sacraments was indeed associated with a conception of Revelation and a reading of history which we can no longer accept, and which even the most orthodox theology—or shall we say much theology which counts itself fully orthodox—seems prepared, rather light-heartedly

erhaps from the point of view of its own requirements, abandon. But the deeply mystical element in religion is perating in all sections of the Christian Church to revive the acramental idea as a felt need of religious experience, and that evival is exposed to the dangers to which the free and irresponsble play of what is called religious experience may so easily ive rise. Those dangers were felt and their menace resisted, ontinuously and indefatigably, by the great Scholastic theolo-ians. That is their value to us as we venture forth upon the ame sea of faith, but with the chastening knowledge that we ave to revise the charts by which they navigated it.

THE REFORMERS AND THE SACRAMENTS

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IN the history of sacramental theory and practice the period of the Reformation is of pre-eminent importance. It was an era pregnant with experiment and change. Whatever may be the relative influence of the different causes which produced this complex movement, its effects upon the doctrine and use of the sacraments were too striking to be ignored. Instead of the sacramental system of mediaeval Catholicism, Protestantism of the continental type evolved a version of Christianity which relegated the sacraments to a position described by a recent writer as that of 'optional appendages' to religion.[1] This alteration of emphasis led to the formulation of new theories of grace and to startling results in the praxis of religious life. It seems to be historically true, as Mr. N. P. Williams has observed, that 'the sacraments occupy a central and dominating position in the life of the Catholic Christian which the specifically Protestant type of devotion does not concede to them' and, as the same writer also says, there would appear to be 'at least a kernel of truth' in the statement that 'the radical difference between the Catholic and the Protestant presentations of Christianity consists in the fact that the former is built upon the idea of justification by grace imparted through the sacraments and the latter upon the idea of justification by faith only.'[2] It is the purpose of this paper to attempt to trace some of the causes and effects of this revolution of thought; and to this end it will be necessary to say something of the general causes of the Reformation, and of its relation to the sacramental system of the mediaeval Church in particular.

The mediaeval Church, the greatest corporation of an epoch which sought corporate expression for all its formative ideas was knit together essentially by its 'doctrine of the transmissio

[1] A. E. J. Rawlinson: *Authority and Freedom*, p. 97 (1924).

[2] N. P. Williams: *The Origins of the Sacraments* (*Essays Catholic and Critical*), p. 369 (1926).

f divine grace through the ministry of a hierarchy which culminated in the person of the vicar of Christ';[3] and this grace as made available for the believer through the agency of sacraments which corresponded with the important crises in his life. It is unnecessary to insist upon the fact that this sacramental system was the very basis of mediaeval Catholicism. St. Thomas Aquinas developed an analogy of the sacraments with Nature. He pointed out that corporal life has three essential needs, birth, growth and nutriment, to which corresponded Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist; and one *per accidens* in case of sickness, *i.e.* healing, to which answered Penance and Extreme Unction. Further there are required a source and an ordering of life, parents and governors, which were provided in the system of the Church by the sacraments of Order, which supplies spiritual needs alone, and of Marriage, which supplies both spiritual and corporal needs.[4] In the everyday life of the people this theory was translated into practice, and the Mass and the Confessional in particular were the most powerful forces in popular religion. But the close connection of the means of grace with the hierarchy at the head of which stood the Pope, involved the administration of the sacraments in the corrupt practices which characterized the Papacy of the later Middle Ages. 'The Papal Court was a market in which spiritual privileges were bought and sold';[5] and Wyclif realized the corrupt possibilities of the unworthy ministration of the sacrament of Penance. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the demand for the reform of the Church in head and members was widespread, and with the failure of the Conciliar Movement to effect reform, the evil became more firmly entrenched and more grievous. In regard to the Mass, the period of the later Middle Ages was marked by a great multiplication of the number of Masses, and by the growth of the Chantry system. This latter development belongs particularly to the fourteenth century, which witnessed the provision of many endowments for the saying of Masses for the souls of the founder and his family. These developments led to

[3] Professor A. Hamilton Thompson: *The Reformation* (*Essays Catholic and Critical*), p. 357.

[4] *Summa contra Gentiles*, iv, 58.

[5] Professor A. Hamilton Thompson: *The Reformation* (*Essays Catholic and Critical*), p. 351.

erroneous ideas of the Mass in the mind of the people and s produced the mercenary element in Catholicism which arouse the denunciation of reformers.

> 'The popular view of the Mass,' writes Mr. B. Manning, 'was di tinctly mechanical. The tenor of wills and anecdotes shows unmistak ably that the layman was taught to believe that he could increase t effect of Eucharistic prayers by the simple process of multiplying the or making them more elaborate. The benefits which the living an the dead received, varied in direct proportion with the number an magnificence of the Masses said, and with the amount of offering ma at each.' [6]

It is not necessary to make more than a general reference to th abuses which crept into the administration of the sacrament c Penance, of which the example of indulgences is only a mor notorious item. It does not, of course, follow that the popul perversions of belief reflect with any approach to accuracy th doctrine of the Church as expounded by its trained theologians but it was against these popular excesses that the reformers wer moved to protest.

There was therefore much in the condition of the Churc throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries which arouse the indignation of reforming spirits; but when the movement c reform which is known as Protestantism came in full tide, ne weapons had been added to the armoury of rebels which enable them to achieve what previous reformers had not achieved, th creation of separated Churches which renounced communion wit the Papacy, and the reform of the Papal Church from within i reaction against the successes won by the revolt. The most im portant of these weapons of offence were the study of the Bib in its original languages, and the invention of printing. It is task of extreme difficulty to estimate the degree of influenc exercised by these two factors. But it may be affirmed that th indirect influence of the Renaissance which led to the perusal c the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testamen instead of resting content with the Vulgate, was a dissolver force of great potency in religious matters. The story of th delighted astonishment of Luther upon finding that the *poen tentia* of the Latin was the μετάνοια of the Greek is a thrice-to tale, but it is of profound importance for the history of th Reformation. The invention of printing, too, gave a new mea

[6] B. L. Manning: *The People's Faith in the time of Wyclif*, p. 73 (191

of spreading novel teaching, as well as being instrumental in producing translations of the Bible into the vernacular. These factors were undoubtedly auxiliary allies of the Reformation; but it is not possible to regard them as the authors of the movement. The revolt came in the person of Luther, and in the form, familiar in the more famous examples of Paul and Augustine, of the conflict between faith and works, between law and grace. Henceforth the experience of justification by faith became the foundation of Luther's theology, causing him to reject entirely the scholastic theology because of its Aristotelian basis, and it is at this point that the conflict with the sacramental system of the Church was joined. Luther the Augustinian had eclipsed Luther the Aristotelian.

II.

The experience of justification by faith as Luther had known it, brought the individual soul face to face with God without the agency of priest or sacrament. Further the promise of such forgiveness was declared in the Gospel and could be found by the seeker throughout the pages of the Bible. In itself this position had startling implications. For it gave a new importance to the Word, and placed it over against the sacraments as a means of communion with the Divine.[7] From this it was a short step to the exaltation of the Bible as the sole authority and basis for belief. Starting from this point Protestantism had to reconstruct its theory and praxis of Christian life; the axe was laid to the root of the tree, and step by step from Luther to Calvin there was built up a new rationale of sacraments and of grace. 'The attack upon traditional dogma, with its appeal to the freedom of private judgment in matters of faith, assailed the entire mechanism which guarded the faith of the mediaeval Church.[8] It remains to examine in more detail the effect of this principle when applied to the sacraments.

In attempting this task, the position adopted by some of the leading Reformers will be considered, in order to discover the underlying principles of their thought. But from the outset one fact is plain. The result of the appeal to the Bible was speedily to reduce the number of rites which the Reformers accounted

[7] Beard: *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 120 (1885, 2nd ed.).
[8] Professor A. Hamilton Thompson: *Essays Catholic and Critical*, p. 357.

sacraments. Of the seven sacraments of the mediaeval Church only two, Baptism and the Eucharist, received a general recognition by the Protestant Churches. This reduction in itself was a revolutionary act; and from the rejection of the traditional number of sacraments resulted a fairly general rejection also of episcopal ordination as the guarantee of a valid ministry. The experience of justification by faith led Luther to accept the idea of the priesthood of all believers; so that 'all Christians are truly of the clergy, and there is no difference among them, save of office alone,' and 'a bishop's ordination is no more than this: that in place of the entire congregation he takes one out of the whole body of those who possess equal power, and commits to him the exercise of that same power for the rest.'[9]

Unlike Calvin, Luther was not a systematic theologian, and his opinions changed from crisis to crisis in his life. From the first, however, he acknowledged only two sacraments. 'I must deny,' he wrote in 1520, 'that there are seven sacraments, and for the present hold to but three—baptism, penance, and bread'; again he added that 'there are, strictly speaking, but two sacraments, baptism and bread; for only in these two do we find both the divinely instituted sign and the promise of forgiveness of sins.' Agreeable to his insistence upon justification by faith Luther gave great prominence to the Word, connecting it closely with the actual sacramental sign.

> 'In every promise of God two things are set before us, the word and the sign. The word we are to understand as being the testament and the sign as being the sacrament; thus in the Mass the word of Christ is the testament, the bread and wine are the sacrament. And as there is greater power in the word than in the sign, so there is greater power in the testament than in the sacrament. A man can have and use the word or testament without the sign or sacrament.'[10]

A plain superiority of the Word to the Sacraments is implied in this passage, which is confirmed by a similar confession declaring that 'the signs might be lacking, if one only have the words and thus might be saved without sacrament yet not without testament.' Even in the actual administration of the rite the word is the all-important thing. 'It is not the water that produces these effects,' wrote Luther of Baptism, 'but the Word of God which accompanies and is connected with the water, and

[9] Beard: *op. cit.*, p. 133.
[10] Luther: *Opera Latina. De Captiv: Babyl*: v. 43 (Frankfurt edition

our faith, which relies on the Word of God connected with the water.' Similarly in the Eucharist, 'the eating and drinking do not produce these great effects, but the words which stand here: "given and shed for you for the remission of sins." He who believes these words has what they set forth, namely, the remission of sins.'[11] The Reformers made little change in the doctrine of baptism, but their innovations centred chiefly round the Mass. Luther insisted that there was no Biblical foundation for the doctrine that 'the Mass is a good work or a sacrifice.' He affirmed that 'a sacrament is a ceremony or work in which God presents to us that which the promise annexed to the ceremony offers, as baptism is a work, not which we offer to God, but in which God baptizes us; . . . a sacrifice, on the contrary, is a ceremony or work which we render to God.'[12] The Mass therefore was a sacrament in which God offers to the individual believer the grace of forgiveness which is declared in the Gospel. It demanded on the part of the recipient the disposition of faith. Luther clung tenaciously to both these points. He himself believed in the Real Presence, that 'while both bread and wine continue there, it can be said with truth, This bread is My body; this wine is My blood, and conversely.' It is true that he rejected the particular theory of this presence which is known as Transubstantiation, but this fact is of little importance compared with his resolute refusal to move away from the words of institution, 'This is my body,' as the guarantee of the change effected by the consecration. But this tenet did not in any wise lessen the necessity of faith in the recipient. The grace offered could not be efficacious apart from belief in the receiver. 'He is truly well prepared,' said Luther, 'who believes these words, "given and shed for you, for the remission of sins." But he who does not believe these words, or who doubts, is unworthy and unfit, for the words "for you" require truly believing hearts.'[13] Some of the points mentioned above are expanded in the Confession of Augsburg—drawn up in 1530 and revised in 1540 by Melanchthon—which deals at length with the ques-

[11] *Shorter Catechism,* 1529. Wace and Buckheim: Luther's Primary Works, pp. 17-18.

[12] *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* (1531), p. 262.

[13] Luther: *Small Catechism,* pt. V (vi). Wace and Buckheim: *op. cit.,* pp. 17-18.

tion of the sacrifice of Masses. It is concerned chiefly to refute the erroneous beliefs which became current in the later Middle Ages, and denounces the notion that the Mass merits remission of sins *ex opere operato*, as also the practice of offering Masses for the dead. Amongst other arguments brought forward against the latter practice is the fact that the Sacrament was instituted so that 'the body and blood of the Lord be taken, and that this be done for the recollection of the benefit of Christ,'[14] a circumstance which evidently could not apply to the departed.

It is agreed that Luther and those whom he influenced were not concerned to draw up a logical system of belief or to remove all inconsistencies in their position. They were content to place side by side the Word and the Sacraments, divine grace and human faith, the rejection of Transubstantiation and their belief in the Real Presence, without deciding nice points of exact theology which arose out of them.[15] But the veil of reserve left by Luther was rudely torn aside by Zwingli. His desire for clarity of thought accompanied by exactitude of expression led him to denounce Luther equally with the Papists. His own opinion was declared in plain terms in his writings. 'All sacraments are so far from conferring grace that they do not even bring or dispense it . . . Sacraments are given for a public testimony of that grace which is previously present to each individual. A sacrament is a sign of a sacred thing, that is, of grace which has been given.'[16] Although Zwingli admits that the 'visible example' has 'some kind of analogy to the thing which is done by the Spirit,' yet he calls it only 'the public testimony.' From such a conception startling theories of Baptism and the Eucharist might be expected. It is not therefore surprising to find that according to Zwingli, 'Baptism does not bring grace, but it bears witness

[14] *The Confession of Augsburg,* Article 3. (Francke: Libri Symbolici Ecclesiae Lutheranae, iv, 20-22.)

[15] *Cf.* Chemnitz: ii, 76, *de Reali Praesentia.* Nos vero praesentiam ipsam, quia testimonium habet verbi Dei, simpliciter credimus: de modo vero praesentiae, quia verbo Dei revelatus non est, judicamus non esse disputandum. Non igitur definimus certum modum illius praesentiae, sed eum humiliter commendamus sapientiae et omnipotentiae Dei.' *Cf. de Necessitate Sacramentorum* (ii, 19): 'Deus sacramenta instituit ut essent externa et visibilia signa et pignora gratiae et voluntatis Dei erga nos; quibus illustri visibili testimonio testificetur, quod promissio ad singulos illos pertineat, qui fide eam in usu Sacramentorum amplectuntur.'

[16] Zwingli: *The Nature of Faith,* 1530. (Opera ii, 541; ed. 1581.)

to the Church that he to whom it is given has received grace.' Of the Lord's Supper he states plainly that it is 'nothing else than a commemoration, whereby those who firmly believe that they have been reconciled to the Father by the death and blood of Christ announce this life-giving death, that is, praise and glory in it and proclaim it.' The words of institution in the Gospels he interprets bravely. 'The whole difficulty lies not in the pronoun "this," but in the verb "is." For this word is often used in Holy Scripture in the sense of "signifies" . . . This word "is" is used in this place in the sense of "signifies." '[17] Accordingly Christ's institution of the elements of bread and wine as His body and blood is 'just the same as if a wife, pointing to a ring of her husband which he had left with her, should say, "this is my husband." '[18] Zwingli poured ridicule upon the idea of eating a 'spiritual body,' and affirmed that to speak of eating the body of Christ sacramentally is 'to eat the body of Christ in mind and spirit with the addition of the sacrament.'[19] According to this theory sacraments were truly *sacramenta*, the visible marks of allegiance, like the military oath of fidelity, drawing their efficacy from the faith of the receiver.

The logic of Zwingli was nothing less than a two-edged sword, not merely piercing to the dividing asunder of Protestantism and Catholicism, but casting division and confusion into the midst of the Reformers' camp itself. Mediatising conferences were held, in which Luther not unnaturally took refuge in silence in the face of such distintegrating criticism, and wrote in chalk before him the words, '*Hoc est corpus meum*,' refusing to add further argument. But these schisms were endangering the entire fortunes of the Protestant movement, and its existence was perceived to depend upon the possibility of devising a system of belief which could reconcile or overcome the differences.

[17] *On True and False Religion. Ibid.* ii, 212.

[18] *A Clear Explanation of the Lord's Supper. Ibid.* 293.

[19] *Exposition of the Christian Faith. Ibid.* 544. *Cf.* 'I believe that in the Holy Eucharist . . . the true body of Christ is present by the contemplation of faith, *i.e.*, that they who thank the Lord for the kindness conferred on us in His Son, acknowledge that He assumed true flesh, in it truly suffered, truly washed away our sins in His own blood; and thus everything done by Christ becomes present to them by the contemplation of faith.' *Ibid.*, 541.

III.

The desired task was undertaken by Calvin, to whom attention must now be turned with the ungrudging recognition that by his provision of a logical and coherent system of theology the Protestant movement was alike saved and stereotyped. It is unnecessary to emphasize the greatness of the work accomplished by him. 'Of what account the Master of the Sentences was in the Church of Rome, the same and more amongst the preachers of the Reformed Churches Calvin had purchased; so that the perfectest divines were judged they which were skilfullest in Calvin's writings.' Such were Hooker's words of the reputation enjoyed by the French Reformer. Upon the question of the sacraments he enunciated a theory of grace which endeavoured to combine the valuable elements in the views of Luther and Zwingli. A sacrament he defined as 'an external sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences His promises of goodwill towards us, in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, and we in our turn testify our piety towards Him, both before Himself and before angels as well as men.'[20] From this it followed that 'there is never a sacrament without an antecedent promise, the sacrament being added as a kind of appendix, with a view of confirming and sealing the promise.' Thus God by sacraments provides for our weakness and ignorance, and establishes in us faith in His promises. In the sacrament itself Calvin like Luther distinguished the word and the external sign, and following Luther again, insisted that the word was 'the promise, which, proclaimed aloud by the minister, leads the people by the hand to that to which the sign tends and directs us.'[21] In reply to Zwingli, Calvin affirmed that in sacraments 'the first thing is that they may contribute to our faith in God; the secondary that they may attest our confession before men,' and therefore he did not approve 'that that which is a secondary thing . . . is by them made the first, and indeed the only thing.'[22] On the other hand he denounced with equal vigour the Papists who taught 'that the sacraments of the New Law justify and confer grace, provided only that we do not interpose the obstacle of mortal

[20] Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion.* Bk. IV, c. xiv, sec. 1.
[21] *Ibid.* section 4.
[22] Calvin: *Institutes. Ibid.* sec. 13.

sin.' Of this doctrine he could only say that 'it is plainly of the devil'; and his own view is expressed most clearly in his insistence that

> 'the office of the sacraments differs not from the Word of God; and this is to hold forth and offer Christ to us. . . . They confer nothing and avail nothing if not received in faith. For the sacraments are to us what messengers of good news are to men or earnests in ratifying pactions. They do not of themselves bestow any grace, but they announce and manifest it and, like earnests and badges, give a ratification of the gifts which the Divine liberality has bestowed upon us.'[23]

There can be no doubt from these statements that, although Calvin repudiated the teaching of Zwingli, he came down clearly and emphatically on the side of Luther against the Catholic doctrine. Nor is it surprising after these principles to find him equating the sacraments of the Old Testament and the New, with this only difference, 'that while the former shadowed forth a promised Christ while He was still expected, the latter bear testimony to Him as already come and manifested.'[24] In Calvin more than in Luther the breach with Catholicism is made plain. The Word is of superior importance to the Sacraments; for 'the assurance of salvation does not depend on participation in the sacraments, as if justification consisted in it. This, which is treasured up in Christ alone, we know to be communicated, not less by the preaching of the Gospel than by the seal of a sacrament, and may be completely enjoyed without this seal.'[25]

Passing from general principles to their expression in particular sacraments, Calvin becomes less clear and unequivocal. Baptism he regards as 'the initiatory sign by which we are admitted to the fellowship of the Church, that being ingrafted into Christ we may be accounted children of God.'[26] It is also an assurance of the forgiveness of sins, though 'we cannot justly attribute more to our baptism' than S. Paul attributes to circumcision 'when he terms it a seal of the righteousness of faith.'[27] Similarly the Eucharist is 'a pledge to assure us of God's continued liberality'; and 'the chief and almost the whole energy of the sacrament consists in these words, "It is broken for you; it is shed for you;" it would not be of much importance to us that the body and blood of the Lord are now

[23] *Ibid.* 17. [24] *Ibid.* 20. [25] *Ibid.* 14.
[26] Calvin: *Institutes*. *Ibid.*, chap. 15, sec. 1.
[27] *Ibid.*, chap. 14, sec. 23.

distributed had they not once been set forth for our redemption and salvation.'[28] In regard to the nature of the presence of Christ in his Supper, Calvin is somewhat vague. Desiring to steer a middle course between Luther and Zwingli he does not define his position with exactitude. He rejects both Transubstantiation and Luther's explanation of the ubiquity of Christ's body. He will not accept the notion that 'to eat the flesh of Christ is no other than to believe in Christ Himself; and he adds that 'the difference between me and the persons whose sentiment I am opposing is this: they consider eating to be the very same as believing; I say that in believing we eat the flesh of Christ, because He is actually made ours by faith, and that this eating is the effect and fruit of faith; or to express it more plainly, they consider eating to be faith itself; but I apprehend it to be rather a consequence of faith.'[29] Dr. Darwell Stone observes that Calvin 'united a strong denial that the elements are by consecration the body and blood of Christ with a strong affirmation that the body and blood of Christ are received by the faithful communicant.' Beyond this refusal to identify the Presence with the consecrated elements, he adopted a position of reverent agnosticism. 'If any one enquire of me respecting the manner, I shall not be ashamed to acknowledge that it is a mystery too sublime for me to be able to express or even to comprehend; . . . I rather experience than understand it.' Inevitably he launched a vigorous polemic against the doctrine that 'the Mass is a sacrifice and an oblation to procure the remission of sins,' though he did not think it necessary to enquire 'how this dogma was understood by the sounder schoolmen, who did not fall into all the absurdities of their successors.' But despite the vagueness of some of his opinions, Calvin had saved Protestantism from distintegration and from the possibility of compromise with Catholic theology.

Continental Protestantism, however, was not the sole representative of the Reformation. The Church of England had also renounced the Papal headship without breaking the continuity of episcopal succession and jurisdiction. The judicious policy of treading the *via media* enabled it to preserve the historic basis of its faith and order whilst admitting needful elements of

[28] *Ibid.*, chap. 17, sec. 3. [29] *Ibid.*, sec. 5.

reform. In the *Ecclesiastical Polity* of Hooker this just balance of old and new received sympathetic and convincing exposition. In reaction from the tyranny of Calvin's opinions, he turned back deliberately to the Thomist theology, and his approach to the doctrine of the Sacraments was through an exposition of the Nature of God, of His relation to the world, and of the Incarnation, which was cast in the scholastic mould. Hooker judged the Reformation not to have involved schism. 'We hope that to reform ourselves,' he wrote, 'is not to sever ourselves from the Church we were of before.' Though adopting much of the scholastic theology, in agreement with the foreign reformers he acknowledged only two sacraments in the strict sense of the term. He defined sacraments as 'heavenly ceremonies' ordained by God, 'first as marks whereby to know when He doth impart the vital or saving grace of Christ unto all that are capable thereof, and secondly as means conditional which He requireth in them unto whom He imparteth grace.' This grace is 'a consequence of sacraments, a thing which accompanieth them as their end,' and proceeds from God, the Author of sacraments. Hence sacraments are 'not physical, but moral instruments of salvation,'—a manifest echo of, and verdict upon, the scholastic speculations—'the use whereof is in our hands, the effect in His.'[30] Hooker rejected the Zwinglian view; 'for we take not Baptism and the Eucharist,' he wrote, 'for bare resemblances of memorials of things absent, neither for naked signs and testimonies assuring us of grace received before, but (as they are indeed and in verity) for means effectual whereby God when we take the sacraments, delivereth into our hands that grace available unto eternal life, which grace the sacraments represent or signify.'[31] Accordingly he found in Baptism 'an action in part moral, in part ecclesiastical, and in part mystical; moral as being a duty which men perform towards God; ecclesiastical in that it belongeth unto God's Church as a public duty; finally mystical, if we respect what God doth thereby intend to work.'[32] After examining the various theories expounded to explain the nature of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, Hooker also concluded that there was 'a general agreement concerning that which alone

[30] Hooker: *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Book V, chapter lvii, sec. 3-5.
[31] *Ibid.*, Book V, chap. lvii, sec. 5. [32] *Ibid.*, chap. lxii, sec. 15.

is material, namely, the real participation of Christ and of life in His body and blood by means of this sacrament.' Further, it was agreed that 'the soul of man is the receptacle of Christ's presence,' so that the question really in dispute was 'whether when the sacrament is administered Christ be whole within man only, or else His body and blood be also externally seated in the very consecrated elements themselves.' In considering this matter Hooker declared that 'the bread and cup are His body and blood because they are causes instrumental upon the receipt whereof the participation of His body and blood ensueth'; but he concluded finally that 'the real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not therefore to be sought for in the sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the sacrament'; and that the sacraments 'really exhibit, but for aught we can gather out of what is written of them, they are not, nor do really contain in themselves, that grace which with them or by them it pleaseth God to bestow.'[33] This careful balancing and combination of conflicting views is characteristic of Hooker, no less than of the Church whose position he defended. For the English Church, retaining episcopacy, left open the way for its members to receive the benefit of auricular confession and absolution, if they so desired; and it also administered to them the elements of the Eucharist with the words 'the body, and the blood, of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul to everlasting life,' allowing any interpretation of the nature of His presence except perhaps those of Zwingli and Transubstantiation.

IV.

From the foregoing consideration of the principles upon which the Reformers built their doctrine of grace, it is a natural step to trace the effect of the movement upon the religious life of the people. In no part of the traditional system were greater changes made than in the two sacraments of chief importance in popular religion, the Mass and the Confessional. The polemic against the doctrine of the sacrifice of Masses led not only to the abolition of the offering of Masses for the departed, but also to the disappearance of the daily Mass, one of the most character-

[33] *Ibid.*, chap. lxvii, sec. 2, 5-6.

istic features of mediaeval Catholicism,[34] the disuse of which was perhaps the most striking external sign of the religious change. Further, many changes appeared in the Eucharistic service of the reformed churches. In the first place it was in the vernacular, for both Luther and Calvin had inveighed against the performance of the Mass in a tongue 'not understanded of the people.' Also the rite was shorn of much of its ceremonial adjunct, for Luther again had wished to remove everything which might distract the attention of the worshipper from the words of institution, which he regarded as the chief constituent of the service, since in them 'and in absolutely nothing else lies the whole force, nature, and substance of the Mass.'[35] Calvin likewise wished to prevent the possibility of the muttering of the formula of consecration 'without meaning and without faith.'[36] In 1544 Luther abandoned the practice of elevation in the Mass, and in 1551 Melanchthon, in an adaptation of the Confession of Augsburg, called the 'Saxon Confession,' dealt with the practices of elevation and adoration, condemning the latter on the ground that 'a rite outside the ordained use has not the nature of a sacrament.'[37] But the reformed liturgy and the turning of the Mass into a Communion did not result in its frequent celebration, for the people did not resort more often to it than had been their customary use. 'It was unusual for a layman in the fourteenth century to take Communion more than once a year,' writes Mr. Manning. 'He was encouraged to think this sufficient, but he was considered most negligent if he omitted to communicate at Easter.'[38] Calvin indeed wished the Eucharist to be celebrated 'very frequently, and at least once in every week' accompanied by a sermon.[39] But the people did not respond, and generally the result of their abstention was, not only that the rite was infrequently performed, but that the people lost familiarity with the service itself and with the tradition of sacramental religion. The First Prayer Book of Edward VI ordered every person to communicate once in the year at least, and required that 'the

[34] *Cf.* B. Manning: *The People's Faith in the time of Wyclif*, p. 4.
[35] Luther: *De Captiv. Babyl. Opera Latina*, v. 31 *seq.*
[36] Calvin: *Institutes*, Bk. IV, chap. 14, sec. 4.
[37] *The Saxon Confession.* (Francke: Libri Symbolici Ecclesiae Lutheranae, iv, 94 *seq.*)
[38] Manning: *Op. cit.*, p. 61.
[39] Calvin: *Institutes*, Bk. IV, chap. 17, sec. 43.

Priest on the weke daie shall forbeare to celebrate the Communion excepte he shall have some that will communicate with him.' Such was the effect of the Reformation upon the Mass. Inevitably the Confessional fared yet worse. Calvin denounced Penance as 'an imaginary sacrament' and a new expedient invented by men, 'as if baptism itself were not a sacrament of penance.' He declared that post-baptismal sins were to be removed by recalling 'the remembrance of our baptism and thus fortify our minds, so as to feel certain and secure of the remission of sins.'[40] The Confessional generally disappeared from the religious systems of the reformed churches; and where retained, as in the English Church, was made optional. Thus the sacrament against which Wyclif had turned his chief force largely disappeared as a result of the Reformation.

Contrary to what might perhaps have been hoped, the other sacraments did not benefit by the dispossession of the Mass and Penance. In the popular religion of the Middle Ages, 'the sacrament of Confirmation had an insignificant part.'[41] Nor did the new order advance it to a position of prominence, although the general tendency was to give it a greater solemnity by deferring its administration until years of seniority. In the Lutheran Church, owing to an opinion that it tended to challenge the completeness of the gift of the Spirit in baptism, it fell into disuse until the seventeenth century, and was revived then as an edifying rite to recall to the adult the meaning of his baptism and to receive his confession of faith before his admission to the Eucharist. Calvin approved of 'such imposition of hands as is simply connected with benediction,' but did not regard the rite as of much importance.'[42] Hooker's position was, that since the Holy Ghost is received in baptism, Confirmation 'is only a sacramental complement.'[43] But in the English Church the size of most dioceses and the multitude of other business pressing upon the bishops prevented the regular and frequent administration of the rite. The sacrament of Order was largely neglected by the Reformed Churches in consequence of their general rejection of episcopacy. Calvin combined with

[40] *Ibid.*, chap. 15, sec. 3-4.
[41] Manning: *Op. cit.*, p. 59.
[42] Calvin: *Institutes*, Bk. IV, chap. 19, sec. 4.
[43] Hooker: *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Bk. V, chap. lxvi, sec. 6.

his scorn of episcopal succession a readiness to allow some rite of ordination. 'The laying on of hands,' he wrote, 'by which the ministers of the Church are initiated into their office, though I have no objection to its being called a sacrament, I do not number among ordinary sacraments';[44] and he denied that it imprinted an indelible character upon the recipient. In the English Church, again, the continuity of episcopal succession was not broken, and the English Prayer Books contained a carefully constructed 'Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons.'

Of Extreme Unction it is not necessary to say much, since it too disappeared to a large extent with the Reformation. Marriage in the Reformed Churches was permitted to the clergy, but suffered comparatively little change in its doctrine and administration. From the side of the Papal Church the Reformation provoked a stern reaction. In reply to the new tenets and heresies, the Council of Trent anathematized anyone who should affirm '*sacramenta novae legis non fuisse omnia a Jesu Christo Domino nostro instituta, aut esse plura vel pauciora quam septem*'[45] ('that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, or that they were either more or less than seven'); and also anyone who should maintain '*sacramenta novae legis non continere gratiam, quam significant*'[46] ('that the sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they represent'). The decrees of the Council not only defined its faith, but also signalized the breaches which the Reformers had made in its doctrinal defences. Protestantism, taking as its starting point the experience of justification by faith, had regarded the sacraments as pledges rather than means of grace, and without efficacy unless received in faith. From this conception of the sacraments, together with the rejection of the doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass, there resulted alike the creation of ministries of prophetic rather than priestly character, and the compilation of forms of public worship which gave precedence to preaching rather than to sacramental observance. Christianity emerged from '*The Institutes*' of Calvin no longer

[44] Calvin: *Institutes. Ibid.*, chap. 14, sec. 20.
[45] Sess. vii, Can. 1.
[46] Sess. vii. De Sacr. in Gen. 6.

primarily a sacramental religion; and between Calvinism and Catholicism there was a great gulf fixed.

V.

Thus the breach between the Reformed Churches and the Church of Rome was complete. But between the Council of Trent with its declaration of the Dominical institution of the seven sacraments, and continental Protestantism with its general depreciation of sacraments and preference for the reading and preaching of the Word, stood the Church of England, whose wisdom it was to keep the mean between the two extremes. From the time of the Elizabethan Settlement its position, as expounded in the classic writings of Hooker, has been based on the principle of combining as much as possible of the old and the new; and its history during the last three-quarters of a century has demonstrated the compatibility of sacramental life with the principles of a Reformed Church.

In its doctrine and use of the sacraments the *Ecclesia Anglicana* has justified its *via media* as the way of true devotion and of intelligent understanding. Nor are signs of the progressive vindication of its position in any wise lacking. In the essay of Mr. N. P. Williams quoted before there is a new attempt to approach the problem of the number of the sacraments. He states that Matrimony is not specifically a 'sacrament of the Gospel'; that it is not possible to regard Unction 'as a sacrament instituted by Christ'; and that even Ordination 'can hardly be counted as a *sacramentum evangelicum*.' This reduces the major sacraments to four, Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, and the Eucharist; and of these Mr. Williams points out that the first three were originally 'not three distinct sacraments, but rather parts of, or moments in, one great cleansing, regenerating Spirit-imparting rite,' which he designates Initiation.[47] It is upon the basis of the two sacraments of Initiation and the Eucharist that the Church of England may point the way to other Churches towards a revival of sacramental life, avoiding alike the extremes of Rome and Geneva, and so fulfil its historic vocation to bring forth out of its treasure things new and old.

[47] N. P. Williams: *The Origins of the Sacraments* (*Essays Catholic and Critical*), pp. 374-7.

SACRAMENTS SINCE THE REFORMATION

By Canon Tollinton, D.D., author of *Clement of Alexandria.*

THE period which I am invited to consider in the present paper is that which has elapsed 'since the Reformation.' At what precise date the Reformation ended is a point on which the authorities are not entirely agreed. Perhaps the process of re-formation never really ends, but is rather an inseparable accompaniment of all life. For practical purposes, however, we may say that we have to consider three to three and a half centuries in the next half-hour. And who is sufficient for these things? The time indeed is short.

What I propose is to remind the Conference briefly of the points and occasions within this period which have any special importance or significance in relation to our subject. The learned, even the moderately learned, will forgive me if I mention what is already familiar to them. Then I shall invite consideration for certain more general reflections which naturally arise, as it seems to me, when sacramental theory and practice during the period in question come under our review.

Both Baptism and the Lord's Supper were discussed at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604. The familiar Puritan objection to the use of the cross in baptism was urged again, but the rite remained unaltered, though, in spite of much justification, the use of the cross continued to be 'greatly stuck at and impugned.'[1] We owe to this Conference the concluding section of the Catechism, that which deals with the Sacraments. Dean Overall, adapting Nowell's earlier catechism, was responsible for the addition, and to this day we are greatly in his debt, save perhaps for the unfortunate assertion that we are by nature 'children of wrath.' Indeed this summary of sacramental doctrine has lost little in value with the passing of years. For a statement drawn up under conditions of such acute controversy, Rome on the one side, the Puritans on the other, this is much

[1] Canon 30.

to say. A glance at the Canons of 1604 shows how large a measure of interest was centered in the two Sacraments at the time. Some parish priests, greatly as they may value Canon Law, would perhaps be puzzled by the rule that 'Strangers are not to be admitted to the Communion';[2] others by the regulation that ministers administering the Sacraments must, if they are graduates, wear their hoods.[3]

William Laud was born in 1573 and became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. He was a man of many fights, with Fisher the Jesuit, with noble lords and indifferent bishops in his own communion, and finally with rising forces which were too strong for him and brought his end in 1645. He was sincere, loyal, rigid, exacting, able to do the right thing so as to produce the maximum amount of irritation. We may call him saint and martyr or reactionary and intolerant, or all in one. In regard to the Sacraments he was strong in his opposition to Transubstantiation and equally strong in his assertion of a real presence in the Eucharist. But he was even more a man of order than of doctrine. Laud felt it intolerable that there should be cock fighting in the chancel, that the Holy Table should be put to common uses, that a dog should be able to snatch away the bread intended for the Sacrament.[4] And there was hubbub and debate in many a parish over the position of the Holy Table. Should it be in the body of the Church, as is still allowed by the rubric, or altarwise at the east end, as Laud insisted? Under his rule there was a real increase in decency and order, but the Church lost in popularity. No period better illustrates the difficulty of disentangling the Sacraments from the many other interests, political, social, controversial, personal, ecclesiastical, with which they were involved.

The wheel goes round and with the Commonwealth different views hold sway. The Westminster Assembly of godly and learned divines discussed whether Judas received the Holy Sacrament or not.[5] Hemero-baptists practised baptism by im

[2] Canon 28. [3] Canon 58.

[4] *cp.* Hutton, *A History of the English Church*, vi, 49, 57; the Enquir in the Archdeaconry of the East Riding, Cosin, *Works* (Anglo-Catholi Library) ii, 1-16.

[5] *cp.* John Lightfoot, *Journal of the Assembly of Divines*, Works, Ed Pitman, xiii.

mersion every day.[6] The use of the Book of Common Prayer was forbidden in 1645. 'Triers' were appointed. There was a Committee for scandalous Ministers. Only in private could the Lord's Supper be administered, but these opportunities were not infrequently found, as is clear from Evelyn's *Diary*. The devotional value of the service comes much into evidence in these difficult days. Baptism went on, but presumably the Prayer Book was not used. In the registers of my own parish[7] the number of baptisms in the years 1645—1660 does not fall below the average.

On July 8th, 1660, the year of the Restoration, Evelyn writes, 'From henceforth was the Liturgy publicly used in our churches, whence it had been for so many years banished.' The Savoy Conference met in the following year. Cosin was there on the one side, Baxter on the other. Of the eight particulars[8] in which the Presbyterians objected to the Prayer Book, four had definite relation to the Sacraments. Eventually the Conference, rejecting the alternative Liturgy which Baxter had composed in fourteen days, brought the Elizabethan Prayer Book into its present form. The Office of Baptism of such as are of riper years was added. In the Communion Office the thanksgiving—not strictly a prayer—for the faithful departed was inserted and the Black Rubric, with an alteration, was reintroduced from the second Book of Edward VI. There followed the Act of Uniformity of 1662 and the ejection of eighteen hundred ministers who refused conformity on Saint Bartholomew's Day three months later. 'One Baptism,' wrote St. Paul, 'One Bread.' It is lamentable to reflect how often these sacraments of unity have been among the principal causes of our acutest divisions. It was on this ground that the founder of the Salvation Army abandoned them altogether.[9]

Still within the seventeenth century we meet with the Non-Jurors. They are an interesting and attractive company, and those who think their policy unreasonable will allow their devoted churchmanship. They concern us, because they had definite aims with regard to the Eucharist. They desired a Liturgy

[6] Hutton, *op. cit.* 129.
[7] Tendring, in the County of Essex and the Diocese of Chelmsford.
[8] Luckock, *Studies in the History of the Prayer Book*, 179.
[9] *Echoes and Memories*, Bramwell Booth, 191, *sqq.*

after the manner of Edward the VI's first Book and those of them who were known as the 'Usagers' did make use of such a form, with the mixed chalice, the epiclesis, prayer for the departed and the prayer of oblation.[10] They would sometimes, when deprived of their bishoprics and their benefices, build private chapels of their own where the Eucharist was celebrated every day for their households and sympathetic neighbours. They survived to the end of the century and then gradually ceased to be. Theologically the balance and proportion of the English Church was adversely affected by the exclusion of these good and learned men.

From the standpoint of the Sacrament, what is to be said of the eighteenth century? 'The defect of the eighteenth century theology,' wrote Mark Pattison, 'was not in having too much good sense, but in having nothing besides.'[11] It was an age that did not greatly encourage devotion, symbolism, the mystical temper or the sense of things unseen. Its religion was robust, manly, intelligent, of the mind rather than of the soul, and it is difficult to imagine Dr. Johnson taking any great interest in the question of Eucharistic Vestments. So Hoadly wrote his minimizing, almost Zwinglian, *Plain Account* of the Eucharist. Learned and pious persons threatened to turn nephews out of doors, if they persisted in going to the Sacrament every week.[12] 'We are now visibly under the extreme of neglect,'[13] lamented Waterland. 'No religion in England,'[14] remarked Montesquieu. Steele, the essayist, sometimes attended church at 6 a.m. on Sunday, but it was for Matins, not the Eucharist.'[15] Addison placed the Church of England midway between Zeal and Moderation,' the situation in which she always flourishes and in which every good Englishman wishes her.'[16] Yet Sir Roger de Coverley 'railed in the Communion Table at his own expense.'[17] A certain Mrs. Cotton in the Cathedral Church at Gloucester

[10] Overton, *The Nonjurors*, 292.
[11] *Essays and Reviews*, 297.
[12] Fitchett, *Wesley and his Century*, 75.
[13] *Doctrine of the Eucharist* (Ed. 1896), 3.
[14] Quoted in Wickham Legg, *English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement*, 2.
[15] *Guardian*, No. 65.
[16] *Tatler*, No. 220.
[17] *Spectator*, No. 112.

was suffered to have 'just by the high altar a small pew hung with green damask, with curtains of the same, and a small corner cupboard, carved and gilt, for birds, in one corner.'[18] So it troubled no one that the Holy Communion remained a test for any civil and military office. Horace Walpole tells an amusing story of an Irish officer who, desiring to join the English army, shocked a good bishop by the alacrity with which he denied not only Transubstantiation but also the Trinity.[19] The indifference of the laity, the infrequency of Holy Communion, are many times lamented by religious writers. For the other side of the picture we must look at Dr. Wickham Legg's *English Church Life* or the records and hymns of John Wesley and his associates. The century had its own greatness, and it has been well said that at least it destroyed nothing. But it was not a sacramental age.

The nineteenth century brings us to events and controversies which living persons can remember, whose influence with visible continuity is operative in the practices and issues of to-day. The Evangelicals did a great religious work, and valued, if they did not emphasize, the Sacraments. The Tractarians, of course, made much of them, and many people who would not call themselves Anglo-Catholics believe the Oxford Movement brought more gain than loss. Pusey was suspended for two years because of a sermon on the Eucharist preached in Christ Church Cathedral in 1843. We have a series of Privy Council decisions, the Gorham case, the Bennett case, the Lincoln judgment, the Public Worship Regulation Act and, later, in the present century, the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline. Debate and controversy mark the period. We are wondering whether the Bishops will settle our differences by their revision of the Prayer Book. On the whole we probably value the Sacraments more to-day than people did a hundred years ago.

I am afraid this short summary runs the risk of being wholly unnecessary or too meagre to be of any use. But I have followed the Aristotelian maxim that we must begin with the facts. Let me proceed to one or two observations of a more general character.

[18] Quoted in Hutton, *A Short History of the Church in Great Britain*, 257-8.

[19] *Letters*, Ed. Toynbee i, 222.

(1) It was one of the purposes of the Reformation to make the way of religion plain and open to the people. The services were to be in the vulgar tongue. The Cup was restored to the laity. The Holy Bread was to be broken 'before the people.' 'Now from henceforth the whole Realm shall have but one use.' Such ceremonies as were retained were 'so set forth that every man may understand what they do mean and what use they do serve.' The English Prayer Book was to be valued 'for the plainness of the Order and for that the rules be few and easy.'[20]

So far as the Sacraments are concerned, can it be said that this object has been achieved? The reaction from what were regarded as the superstitions of the Mass went far in the direction of indifference and neglect and the Eucharist, from being the popular service, has become rather the devotional opportunity of the faithful few. On Easter Day, 1800, there were six communicants in St. Paul's.[21] When Tait celebrated in Carlisle Cathedral for the last time as Dean in 1856, there were seventy-two communicants, 'far more than I ever saw before,'[22] he remarks. The celebration became 'the second service,'[23] almost secondary, one might say. I have a Prayer Book given to my father in 1842, in which that part of the Communion Office which follows the Nicene Creed is printed in significantly smaller type. An annual reception of the Sacrament for long was usual and is still not unknown.

On the other hand Romaine, the Evangelical, administered to 500 communicants on Good Friday, 1766,[24] and, in towns at any rate, a Choral Celebration as the main service of Sunday morning may be said to meet a need. The mediaeval Mass had its own characteristics; an early Sunday celebration in an English parish church, with its restraint, its simplicity, its intention, has also singular and distinctive value. But it is not a service of the people. One may too lament the degree to which Public Baptism has, in effect, become 'private.' At most, a mere handful of friends gather round the font. Sometimes the mother

[20] The Prayer Book: *Concerning the Service of the Church,* and *Of Ceremonies.*

[21] Hutton, *Short History,* 258.

[22] *Life,* i, 202.

[23] The description occurs as early as Cosin, *Works,* ii, 8.

[24] Overton and Relton, *A History of the English Church,* vii, 175.

brings the child alone. What should be the glad and open welcome of a new member to the spiritual family of God in Christ, becomes the unnoticed rite of a Sunday afternoon, almost as private and devoid of happy recognition as the doctor's call for vaccination.

(2) Throughout the whole period, from Hooker to Bishop Gore, the controversy with Rome has gone on. We have neither settled affairs with Rome nor—not even at Fulham Conferences[25]—reached agreement among ourselves. Yet it may be claimed, I think, that our Anglican divines, particularly those of the Caroline period, have not wholly failed in their attempts to prove that Transubstantiation can claim support neither from Scripture, nor from antiquity, nor from reason. Rome still abides by the decision of Trent. Except for the denunciation, in 1907, of the errors of the Modernists, including such as concern the Sacraments, the official utterances of Rome on the subject have been singularly few since the Council of Trent closed its sessions in 1564.[26] The philosophical distinction between substance and accidents, upon which the whole doctrine of Transubstantiation rests, has gone the way of a good many other theories. But we must not expect the Vatican to be sensitive to changes in philosophy. It is claimed, however, that Roman Theology does hold a more spiritual conception of the manner of Christ's presence in the Mass than was usual in the sixteenth century,[27] and ceremony can be elastic where doctrine is rigid, so that Dr. Adrian Fortescue is free to desire a less frequent use of the kiss in the Eucharistic ritual of his Church.[28] Anglican writers have been more successful in showing where and why they dissent from Rome than in proving any one exact phase of doctrine to be that of the Church of England. Possibly it is better so. It leaves us room. There is wisdom in the Bishop of

[25] cf. *The Report of a Conference held at Fulham Palace in October*, 1900, Ed. H. Wace.

[26] Denziger's *Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum* makes this clear.

[27] Dr. Darwell Stone, in *The Holy Communion*, 187, quotes the view of a recent Roman Catholic writer that 'the Communis Sententia Theologorum, in conformity with the doctrine set forth at Trent, is in favour of a spiritual, supernatural, sacramental, as opposed to a corporal, natural, and grossly carnal manner of being of the presence of our Lord's body and blood in the Eucharist.'

[28] *Ceremonies of the Roman Rite*, xix.

Gloucester's reminder that the primary command, 'This do in remembrance of Me,' was not a command to believe anything, or to understand anything, or to accept any particular words in any particular way;[29] the command was to do something. Devotion and worship more than doctrine are the real interest.

In some respects the controversy is a particularly irritating one. Terms should be defined, especially the little word 'is.' What measure of identity does it imply? 'This is my body.' You show a child a point in a map and say, 'That *is* London.' You go to the play and say, 'Sybil Thorndike *is* Joan of Arc.' A lawyer hands you a document and says, 'Here *is* your estate.' The openings for confusion are endless. So with the very use of the term 'body.' Body has extension in space. But the body of Christ in the Holy Sacrament is not to be understood in any local, spacial, material sense. It may be something as abstract as the spiritual principle of Christ's humanity. And yet all through the terms of locality, 'in,' 'under,' 'contains,' so constantly recur, that we seem again and again brought back to the domains of space and material substance, when we hoped our thoughts were moving in the freedom of the spirit. Writers of every school of thought protest that when we speak of a presence of Christ we go beyond our range of explanation and understanding. 'Without searching or inquiring of the manner how,'[30] says Hooker. 'Experior magis quam intelligo,'[31] said Calvin. 'Inexplicable by any carnal or earthly experience'; 'Beyond all thought and much more beyond all words of ours'; 'A mysterious and indeed an ineffable manner'; '*Rem scimus, modum nescimus*,' are other similar phrases.[32] 'It is not needful,' said Cardinal Bellarmine, 'to understand the wonders of God, but it sufficeth to believe them.'[33] There is plain truth in all this. The things of the spirit may not always be captured by the enquiring mind. But surely it is an evident attempt to have it both ways when controversialists, after relegating sacramental

[29] Bampton Lectures, 272.

[30] *Eccl. Pol.*, v, 67, 12.

[31] Inst. Christ. Rel., iv, xvii, §32.

[32] The phrases come from the writings of Sir William Palmer, Keble, Laud and a 'reverend dignitary of the Church,' quoted by Dr. More, the Platonist.

[33] *An Ample Declaration of Christian Doctrine*, p. 294 in Eng. Tr. Douay, 1617.

realities to the domain of faith, intuition, mystical experience, divine disclosure and the like, then proceed by all the resources of logical proof, evidence, argument, compelling demonstration, to prove that their own particular view is the right one. One wonders whether the vast mass of controversial literature has really added much to the value of sacramental rites. To which it might be answered that what is valued is inevitably discussed.

(3) The Eucharist has become increasingly Christo-centric. Its sacrificial aspects have been emphasized; its other implications, for instance, brotherhood, gladness, gratitude, have been correspondingly in abeyance. From the Roman standpoint the very purpose of the Incarnation was Christ's fulfilment of His priestly office. In the Sacrament He is priest at once and victim. Essentially the Sacrament is a representation of Christ sacrifice, once on Calvary, perpetually in heaven. In this concentration of all interest upon a single point, how much are we in danger of losing and forgetting. That we, poor unsatisfactory humans as we are, may still bring our gifts and offerings to the Most High; that the great Father has a welcome for His children at His board; that the one bread is broken (can you imagine anything more separate, self-contained, individual, and unassociated than a wafer?) in token of Christian fellowship; that upon our gifts the Spirit is sent down to give them a higher purpose and significance; that men may eat Angels' food and that there is given to us out of the divine bounty the Bread of Life for the burden of life—all this essentially inherent in the significance and symbolism of the Eucharist we lose in proportion as we restrict its meaning to Christ's sacrifice alone. Hort used to warn us against 'Jesus-worship.'[34] I believe it implies no dishonour whatever to our Lord, if I say that the common picture of Christ pleading in heaven with the Father His finished work on our behalf is fundamentally alien to a real belief in the goodness of God. If God must be persuaded, if somewhat reluctantly He is induced at last, by the Son's insistence, to consent to admit His creatures to His presence, then surely all the teaching of Jesus about the Father, all the value of the Johannine truth that God is Love, are lost and gone.

[34] *Life and Letters of F. J. A. Hort*, ii, 50; *cf.* Gore, *Body of Christ*, 106.

The truth is that in these last hundred years we have been ceasing to interpret our religion in terms of Law; it is natural to-day to express spiritual verities rather in terms of Life. Science, if it has not explained life, has shown us something of its wonder and made us familiar with many of its processes. What matters is not that we should be let off penalties, but that we should attain to the more abundant life. Yet the transactional theory of the Atonement is still embedded in our formularies. The sacrifice of Christ may be so represented as to heighten the doctrinal legalism of the Eucharistic rite, A truer doctrine of the Atonement, such an appropriation of an old truth under altered conditions as the late Dr. Rashdall gave us in his invaluable Bampton Lectures,[35] should lead us to moralize and spiritualize such ideas as 'propitiation,' 'remission,' 'efficacy,' 'satisfaction,' and this would have its effect on Eucharistic theory. Our interpretation of the Sacraments might be wider, more many-sided, less specialized. There would be less risk of the goodness of God being obscured by the sacrifice of Christ. Jesus was the Way, but it is God to whom our worship is addressed. It seems to me the Sacrament has grown more Christocentric since the Reformation and that, at present, it is unduly so.

(4) I have one other doctrinal suggestion to offer. Two tendencies which have been at work since the Reformation, especially in the nineteenth and present centuries, have influenced our attitude towards the Sacrament. The first of these is the decline in authority of the letter of the Scriptures; the second is the increasing prevalence of the scientific point of view. Therefore it is no longer possible to argue, 'The Bible says so and it is consequently true.' Therefore we may no longer isolate sacramental rites as exceptional, miraculous, unrelated to the context of experience. It is difficult now to justify any theory which rests mainly on a mere *opus operatum*. We are increasingly convinced of the reality of things spiritual; we are increasingly unwilling to accept what involves any sort of magic. A theory of Baptism which postulates any change of nature in the unconscious child, a theory of the Eucharist which involves any hypostatical alteration in the elements of bread and wine, present difficulties almost

[35] For 1915, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*. Published in 1919.

insuperable to minds which have reached maturity under our present conditions of thought.

Such problems are solved, and yet solved, as it seems to me, without any loss of sacramental values, if we view Baptism and the Eucharist in their more universal aspects. Let me refer to one recognized teacher in regard to each.

Frederick Robertson, of Brighton, in days when controversy over Baptism was rife, held the view that Baptism asserts and claims the child as a child of God rather than makes it so to be. In his sermons and in his letters[36] Robertson maintained his view that the rite expresses and asserts what is already true in the divine will and intention. In a particular instance the Sacrament appropriates what is, independently of all rites, the true relationship of man to God.

For the Eucharist let us turn to the monumental work of Thomassin, the Roman theologian of the seventeenth century. The tenth book of his treatize *On the Incarnation of the Word of God* deals with the priesthood of Christ. He lays a special emphasis on Christ's perpetual priesthood in heaven. The ascended Christ is more truly than ever a priest, for ever offering Himself to the Father 'In coelo semet Patri perenniter immolans.'[37] Our altars here are but as steps to the true altar which is above. There is much more in the same sense. The theory rests upon the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews on Melchisedek. There is little about it in the Gospels or St. Paul. But it has had a good deal of acceptance; among modern writers both Dr. W. Bright, Bishop Gore and Prof. F. J. Hall have attached importance to it.[38] Now if we take this doctrine of the perpetual sacrifice of Christ in heaven and translate the vivid language of religion into the less concrete terms of philosophy, we may say that the Divine Will makes for unity, that the unity of cosmic order is an expression of the mind of God, that the soul of man can only rest when it finds its harmony with the will of God. Such unification, reconciliation, atonement, was essentially the work of Jesus, as much in His life as in His death. Equally true is it that the Spirit of Christ still, in its more universal modes,

[36] *Sermons,* Second Series, iv and v. *Life and Letters,* ii, 66, 299.

[37] *Op. cit.,* c. xi.

[38] *cf.* Gore, *Body of Christ,* 185-209; F. J. Hall, *The Sacraments*; Bright, *Ancient Collects,* note on pp. 144-5.

operates towards unity. In the Eucharist under symbolical and sacramental forms we appropriate, realize, express what is always and everywhere true independently of all rites and *opera operata*. Here, as in Baptism, the truth, the presence, if you will, is independent, objective, locally apprehended but intrinsically universal, a truth of heaven expressed through the particular *media* of earth. Strictly speaking it does not seem to me that the reality of Christ can be more rightly brought under limitations of space and locality than you can do so with the truth of a mathematical proposition. But both can be locally experienced and appropriated. We do not fabricate such things by words of magical potency, but we give particular expression to what has independent and universal validity. In that sense, as Origen said, the bread is the Word. There is no need for magic. There need be nothing to shock or alarm our reason. We appropriate what is already there. Baptism, with Robertson, declares not creates. The Eucharist, with Thomassin, is a thing of heaven. But we realize it, represent it, 'show' forth, as St. Paul said, the abiding verity under conditions of space and time. I do not know why a Modernist should object to this and I do not know why a Catholic should ask for more.

(5) Finally, if we survey the period as a whole, it seems to be characterized now by controversy, now by indifference. Happily there is more to say. Piety, devotion, service, the thankful and regular use of the means of grace, did not wholly fail, though the many neglected and the theologians fought. 'While the world disputes,' said Laud, 'I believe.'[39] It is well to reflect, as we scan the bare names in a baptismal register, on the hopes and fears and prayers of friends and parents that are implied. Let us recall Hooker's jubilant words, 'O my God thou art true, O my Soul thou art happy.'[40] Let us watch John Evelyn praying at the altar for a dying brother, or bringing his son three years later to his first communion on Easter Day after a week's preparation.[41] Let us note the devotional standard implied when Dr. Johnson comes from church without communicat-

[39] *Summary of Devotion*, § Eucharistica; Works, Anglo-C. Library, iii, 72.

[40] *Eccl. Pol., loc. cit.*

[41] *Diary*, 6th March, 1670; 30th March, 1673.

ing, though he would gladly have remained with his friends, because he had not made due premeditation.[42] George Herbert has his chapter on 'The Parson in Sacraments.' Charles Simeon returns from the Presbyterian north glad to share again in the Liturgy of the Church of England.[43] Tait, a Scotchman, found an unfailing source of help in the Eucharist.[44] Herbert Spencer on his death-bed said to his friend Beatrice Potter, now Mrs. Sidney Webb, 'Let us break bread together.' A bunch of grapes was set upon the bed and they each partook of it, in some sort a sacramental act.[45] The output of devotional literature is large and constant. *A Week's Preparation* reached its fifty-first edition in 1751. Gauden's *Whole Duty of a Communicant* was in its fourteenth edition in 1723. Other books were *The Fire of the Altar* (1683) and *The Crucified Jesus* (1686). Probably the best was Jeremy Taylor's *Worthy Communicant*. I do not suppose these manuals are greatly read to-day. I think we should find them tedious and unprofitable. That should not blind us to the measure of piety and devotion which the wide circulation accorded to them in their time implies. At the close of his learned and fair work on the *History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* Dr. Darwell Stone writes of the Eucharist:

> 'In whatever ways it may have been used, and however it may have been explained, its pre-eminence is unquestionable.'[46]

That is probably true, even for the period since the Reformation. And as here and there through the years we have glimpses of the Church's sacramental worship in its best and purest forms, we seem to be taken in spirit once again to the Upper Room. It is good to be there.

[42] Boswell's *Life*. The date was 3rd June, 1781.
[43] Moule, *Charles Simeon*, 166.
[44] *Life* passim, esp. i, 155, 188; ii, 294, 327, 333, 596.
[45] Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship*, 37.
[46] ii, 648.

THE MYSTICS AND THE SACRAMENTS

By the Reverend R. D. Richardson, M.A., B.Litt., author of *The Present Conflict of Ideals in the Church of England.*

'MYSTICISM,' it has been said, 'is the tendency to approach the Absolute, morally, by means of symbols.' This approach, however, may be either negative or positive, and corresponds to two distinct types of mysticism.

If the symbols are regarded as veils which cloak Reality, the mystic desires to be rid of them and to lose himself in the formless Beyond, or 'Divine Dark' as he calls it. This, the negative way of mysticism, is of course unthinkable as a spiritual road for the twentieth century: a soul so sequestered within itself, 'snug in the centre of Nothing,' as Molinos puts it, can have but a diminutive, superficial existence. But even so, the value of the experience depends upon its being the mystic's own experience: it would lose its reality did he not himself experience it. Thus we come at once to the fundamental characteristic of genuine mysticism: always and everywhere it is a religion of personal experience.

Granted this, however, it becomes immediately obvious that our experience of God should be as rich as possible. The failure of negative mysticism is that it strips man of everything save the inmost seed of God within his soul instead of developing that seed through the various degrees of likeness that lie between it and God Himself. Mystics of the positive type pursue this latter course, striving, as Plotinus said, to bring the God Who is within them into harmony with the God Who is in the Universe. They regard symbols therefore not as veils but as manifestations of Reality, and believe that the richness of the life within the soul depends on the fulness of the use it makes of symbols: 'he who sees the inward in the outward is in better case than he who only sees the inward in the inward.'[1] The proper way to use symbols is to incarnate them as it were within the soul, which, when it now withdraws into itself, no longer withdraws into emptiness. Again, when it goes out of itself in active interests, it no longer 'falls in pieces in distrac-

[1] Henry Suso.

tion' but stamps instead upon the world, by means of other symbols of its own, the significance of those which have entered into its own experience. This is the systole and diastole of the spiritual life, and symbols used in this way for developing personal religion are called sacraments. Their number is infinite.

Of the seven so-called Sacraments of the Church, however, only two or three have played a prominent part in the experience of the great Christian mystics. The stress which they lay upon Baptism is comparatively small, since most of them were baptized as infants: Confirmation has not usually been the occasion of any marked spiritual crisis: Orders occupy an important place only in the mystical system of the pseudo-Dionysius: Matrimony is ignored except by Browning: the place accorded to Extreme Unction is definite but slight. By far the greatest emphasis is laid on Penance and the Eucharist, and of these two the latter occupies the foremost place. It is, therefore, with Eucharistic mysticism that we shall be concerned in this paper: I propose to treat the subject historically.

The Institution of the Eucharist was itself a mystical act. Jesus evidently thought it the best means of symbolizing certain things, three of which concern us here:

(1) That the self must die if it is to live. This is the individualistic side of the symbolism.

(2) That the self must die if others are to live. This is the social side of the symbolism.

(3) That this death to self consists in a self-giving and self-sharing love whose inspiration must be the love that led Jesus Himself to the Cross.

In the *Epistles of St. Paul* this mystical death to self is still conceived in the way that Jesus conceived it, as brought about by unselfish love. It is set forth, however, under the symbolism of Baptism, not under the symbolism of the Eucharist. The change is not surprising in one whose own baptism had only come about in middle age. It is true that St. Paul regards the celebration of the Eucharistic meal as a 'shewing forth' or symbol of the death of Christ and therefore indirectly of His love, but he does not explicitly connect the reception of the blessed and broken bread with his characteristic mystical doc-

trine of the indwelling Christ. The Communion for him is a κοινωνία, a fellowship of those who have received the Spirit, whose unity is symbolized by partaking of one cup and one loaf. This profoundly social side to St. Paul's Eucharistic mysticism is the most distinctive thing about it, and is almost, though not quite, unique in a Christian mystic of the first importance.

Thus the author of the *Fourth Gospel*, in so far as he can be said to give any definite Eucharistic teaching at all, omits altogether the social aspect of it. The great Eucharistic chapter which begins with a joyous feast is narrowed down at once, points out Baron von Hügel, to something purely individual: '*He* that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in *him*.' While there are some fourteen singulars in the chapter, there are only three indications of plurals.

Moreover, in detaching the Eucharistic teaching from the Last Supper and connecting it with the Feeding of the Five Thousand, St. John turns the occasion of it into one of the seven great signs. His doctrine of the Eucharist, therefore, becomes the spiritualization of a miracle. This spiritualization of the miraculous, rather than the clear rejection of it, is characteristic of the mystics: we shall meet it again in connection with the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

We must also note St. John's usage of certain physical expressions as symbols of union with Christ and the knowledge of God; 'eating,' 'drinking,' 'thirsting for,' and 'abiding in' Him; while the simile of a bubbling spring of water is used in connection with eternal life. These expressions profoundly coloured later Eucharistic mysticism, being used by many mystics to describe the physical ardours and sensations which they felt at Communion.

The teaching of *St. Clement of Alexandria* (c. 200), the next great representative of Christian mysticism, is nowhere more mystical, says Canon Tollinton, than in his treatment of the Eucharist. He stands in the same tradition as St. John: his actual references are similarly allusive and indistinct, but he appears to identify feeding on the Lord's Body and Blood with the knowledge and spiritual apprehension of God. The social aspect of the rite, however, seems more pronounced than in St. John.

But it is *St. Augustine* (354—430) who approaches nearest to St. Paul in emphasizing the latter point. 'Ye are the Body of Christ,' he echoes, 'and the members: the mystery of yourselves is placed on the Lord's Table.'

The practice of daily Communion had by this time established itself, but St. Augustine is far from sharing the eagerness for it of many later mystics: 'I neither praise nor blame the custom' is all he says. No doubt the growing stress on the Eucharist during his time was the result of its gradual approximation in the minds of Christians to the Pagan mysteries: it was sought to gain a physical or quasi-physical deification, or imperishableness, by sacramental, magical means. The comparative coolness of St. Augustine concerning the Eucharist is perhaps due to his standing in a different tradition — the philosophical tradition of St. Clement and St. John, in which Eucharistic language is symbolical of a union with the Divine which is really achieved by knowledge.

There is, however, a deeply personal and passionate note in Augustine's thought of union with Christ which is not equalled again among the philosophical mystics until the fourteenth century. 'I heard Thy voice,' he says, 'crying to me from on high, "I am the Food of the full-grown: grow and thou shalt feed on Me. Nor shalt thou change Me into thy substance as thou changest the food of thy flesh, but thou shalt be changed into My substance."'

This philosophical, or 'substantial' union as Heiler calls it, received systematic treatment in connection with the Eucharist at the hands of *pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite*, during the late fourth or early fifth century. In him we meet for the first time a definite Eucharistic mysticism. He makes the Eucharist part of a great sacramental scheme of life, participation in which brings about 'our proportioned deification.' 'The mind is raised' by a whole series of suitable symbols, 'visible beauties . . . in heaven and in earth, in sun, fire, and water,' all of which, 'so far as it is possible for them,' are 'reflections of the invisible comeliness.' But 'union with the Divine Spirit' is arrived at particularly through 'the most Divinely initiating Eucharist.' This is the far-reaching step that Dionysius took; in the last resort it is only 'the Communicant' who 'is led to the summit

of deiformation.' It is important to note, however, that his insistence on the Eucharist is based only on the ground that it is the best symbol under which a fusion of the human with the Divine can be accomplished. Here he comes near to the view of Jesus, near and yet so far away, for the Eucharist is not conceived by Dionysius as the symbol of self-giving and self-sharing love, but the farthermost end of a 'luminous chain suspended from celestial heights' whereby we may raise ourselves to the perfect knowledge of God. 'The Divine Tradition,' he says, 'is superior to mental energy' and must be used to elevate the mind to the highest mysteries of the Godhead. Then, he goes on, the deified mind, 'having stood apart from all existing things, and having also dismissed itself, is made one with the super-luminous rays.' This is the state of supreme union in which the soul has 'the most divine knowledge of Almighty God.'

The element of love does indeed enter in, but it is a diffused impersonal kind of attraction of the heavenly for the earthly which though it is called ἔρος, ultimately dissolves all human relationships.

Other weaknesses in his scheme are its rigid systematization and the fact that although Dionysius teaches no miraculous change in the consecrated elements, the action of spirit is nevertheless tied to a definite material means: its essential idea therefore—unaccountableness or freedom—is removed: he forgets that the Spirit bloweth where it listeth.

The permanent and original elements in his system are the inclusion of the Eucharist in a wide sacramental view of life, and the disciplinary position assigned to it in the soul's ascent to God.

In the ninth century the works of Dionysius were translated and commented on by *John the Scot, Erigena*, who carried on the philosophical tradition of mysticism in the West. But it takes on warmer and more personal accents in Erigena than in Dionysius, probably due to the influence of Augustine, 'my deere, deere Saint,' as a later mystic calls him. Erigena has not left us his opinion as to the necessity of sacraments, but he adopted the sacramental view of life, and it is improbable that

he differed greatly from Dionysius on the point. In one place he describes the Eucharist as 'the typical symbol of the spiritual partaking of Jesus.' Nevertheless the place actually occupied by the Eucharist in his extant writings is comparatively small, and the proportion obtains among those who were chiefly influenced by him.

His influence is to be seen most clearly and at its best in *Meister Eckhart* (1260—1329), the greatest of speculative Christian mystics. Eckhart, like Dionysius and all great mystics, taught that the soul only finds union with God when it rises above itself and becomes spirit; but he abolished the artificial system of the Areopagite which attempted to lift man to God by definitely ordered stages. God is the ground of the soul itself, and no intermediaries are required between the two. Even the Seven Sacraments, he says, often block the path of many devout people, who hinder themselves by over-preoccupation, outwardly, with them. Their real service is to 'point us to the one and only truth; so we ought not to dally with the symbols but penetrate to the actuality.' This actuality is the sublime nature of the Father which is overflowing in love, and of which an image, or divine spark, has been implanted in man's soul. By means of Sacraments this spark is kindled into flame and our whole nature made one with Him. Everything that helps to bring this about Eckhart regards as a sacrament: 'I make bold to say,' he writes, 'that were anyone prepared for outward food as for the Sacrament, he would receive God as much as in the Sacrament: which to many is a hard saying, albeit quite consistent with the truth.'

Another important school of mystics who were influenced by Erigena were the Victorines, founded by *Richard* (*ob. c.* 1173) *and Hugh* (1097—1141) *of St. Victor*. These succumbed to the characteristic passion of mystics for logic, but unlike Dionysius gave no real place in their mysticism to the Eucharist. It was indeed regarded as necessary, but rather for the purpose of imparting supernatural grace to assist the soul in performing spiritual exercises on a mystical ladder. This view of the Eucharist has been held by many mystics of the negative type, notably by *St. John of the Cross* (1542—91), who deprecates eagerness for Communion as 'a very great imperfection' arising

from improperly mortified sensuality. 'The invisible grace conferred by the Sacrament is far better.'

Likewise a study of the writings of the English mystics, who until the end of the fourteenth century were moulded largely by Richard of St. Victor, reveals few and mostly disappointing references to the Eucharist. Their works, however, are less insistent on spiritual charts and maps and more genuinely religious. This warm devotional tone, rising sometimes even to a passion for Jesus, and which we shall see presently as a new development in connection with the Eucharist, points also to the influence of a contemporary of Richard of St. Victor, namely, St. Bernard, in whom the more romantic side of mystical religion first appeared.

The view of *St. Bernard* (1059—1153) with regard to the Sacraments is that none may neglect them: they are priceless for training: at the same time the near Presence of God is better. 'Since I am on earth,' he says, 'it behoves me to be content . . . with the Sacrament as with a husk.' His greatest Eucharistic comment however is the following: 'What is it to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus but to share in his sufferings and to imitate the life that He lived in the flesh.' Such broad undogmatic sayings, of which there are more than one, are the natural movements of a great soul, a kind of moral and spiritual compensation for the traditional doctrine of the Eucharist from which St. Bernard did not otherwise shrink. Thus we find him working cures with the sacred elements, and even confronting a recalcitrant ruler with the sacramental species to bring him (successfully) to his knees.

St. Francis of Assisi (1182—1226) resembles St. Bernard in that there is nothing specifically Eucharistic about his mysticism: he was a Nature mystic. His devotion to the Sacrament was the outcome of his love for Jesus, joined to an unquestioning belief in Transubstantiation. It has been said that his reverence for the Eucharist was the very soul of his piety, but I cannot agree: it was the source of his veneration for the priesthood. He uses quite a different set of symbols when he speaks of Christ dwelling within the soul. Nevertheless there is a distinctly spiritual side to his Eucharistic teaching. 'God offers Himself to us as to His children. This is why I beg you,

all of you, my brothers, kissing your feet, and with all the love of which I am capable, to have all possible respect for the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.' He says, too, like all the mystics, that only those in whom the Spirit of God dwells *receive* the most Holy Body and Blood. His extension of the sacramental principle is, of course, very wide. Speaking, *e.g.*, of music, he says: 'The children of this world understand not the Sacraments of God; and musical instruments appointed for God's praise have been converted by men's lust into means of giving pleasure to their ears.'

Two points, however, in his Eucharistic teaching call for special mention. First, his instruction in a letter to the Chapter General that only one Mass a day shall be celebrated, even though many priests be present. Here we have the social side of the Eucharist once more coming into prominence. Secondly, the extraordinary scene at the close of his life when, as Sabatier says, he took bread and brake it and gave it to his disciples; and 'there in the poor cabin of Portiuncula, without altar and without priest, was celebrated the Lord's Supper.'

We pass now to an important group of phenomena which throw into relief the abnormal psychological make-up of many mystics. This side of their natures, spurred to increased activity by the definite supernaturalism of the Church's teaching, and combined with that warm personal devotion to Jesus which we have already seen developing in the West, produced an Eucharistic mysticism of a very different type from that of Dionysius. The movement began in the thirteenth century with a group of German women.

St. Mechthild of Hackborn (*ob.* 1310), for example, in one of her many visions, saw Christ kiss every communicant. *St. Gertrude the Great* (1256—1311), visited by Christ at Communion, saw Him very weak as if He were dying, and was told by Him that He was dying for love: she herself experienced the same sensations. *St. Angela of Foligno* (1248—1309), the Italian contemporary of St. Gertrude and St. Mechthild, relates that she saw the Body of Christ in divers forms in the Blessed Sacrament: at one time His throat only, incomparably greater than the sun both in beauty and quality: sometimes, she says, the eyes appear, 'of great splendour and so large that I behold

nothing of the Host save the edge.' 'At the sight of both these things I (am) refreshed with so much joy that I cannot compare the one with the other, because both are so great that I think I shall never lose them.'

St. Catherine of Sienna (1347—80) and *St. Catherine of Genoa* (1447—1510) communicated with such fervour that immediately afterwards they passed into ecstasy. The former could not be aroused for hours, even when pricked with pins by curious worshippers and thrown out into the street and kicked by the pious guardians of the church. Both of them lived for extensive periods without any food save the Blessed Sacrament, being in fact unable to eat ordinary food without agony, sickness, and choking.

All these mystics communicated as often as possible, sometimes complaining bitterly that priests seemed to think the Sacrament was not instituted for laymen, and looking forward to receiving it with passionate eagerness and indescribable longings. S.S. Gertrude and Teresa describe the fierceness of their desire by saying that if spears had been pointed at their hearts they would have rushed upon them to the altar. Even *Madame Guyon* (1648—1717), the Quietist,[2] tells how she arranged for Mass at unearthly hours in order to escape the vigilance of her unsympathetic husband, and avers that when an early celebration was held by chance in a wayside chapel not in general use she woke up with a strong intuition that the service would be held and therefore did not hesitate to go.

Most of these mystics speak of their bodily sensations after Communion under the figure of inward burning. To St. Teresa (1515—82), as also to St. Catherine of Sienna, it seemed sometimes that torrents of mingled blood and fire were being poured upon her. Likewise they both experienced increased mental activity during or after Communion, Catherine, for example, receiving inspiration to dictate her *Divine Dialogue*, and Teresa resorting to it deliberately to solve knotty points in describing her *States of Prayer*: 'it can do everything,' she exclaims triumphantly. And not only mental but also physical health was imparted by the Sacrament. Teresa, for example, says that

[2] Molinos also, contrary to what is generally thought, strongly advocated daily Communion.

after communicating she found rest from bodily pains, and that it calmed her when she felt so irritable that she could have eaten people up. Catherine of Sienna, to the amazement of all present, even rose from her death-bed in order to communicate. Many other instances could be given, authentic beyond dispute.

More amazing still are the descriptions by Angela of Foligno and Catherine of Genoa of the peculiar sweetness that they found in the consecrated Host, the latter affirming that she would be able to distinguish between a consecrated and an unconsecrated Host by the difference in taste. In the year 1869 experiments of a similar nature are recorded to have been made on the suffering, stigmatized mystic *Louise Lateau*, who while absorbed in ecstasy followed in adoration a consecrated Host accidentally left in a pyx which was brought near her, but could on no account be induced to do the same when an unconsecrated bread was placed in the pyx. The incredulity with which I first read of these phenomena has passed into something like acceptance. The Roman Church, of course, regards them as guarantees of the miracle of Transubstantiation: I think that we may perhaps accept them without drawing the same conclusion. A study of so moderate a work on *Supernormal Faculties in Man* as that by Eugéne Osty shows very convincingly that certain subjects possessed of abnormal sensibilities can, when in contact with a given object, even without touching it, describe accurately its associations through a variety of sensorial images, visual, gustatory, or olfactory, immediately aroused in the percipient by concentration on the object concerned.

But the unique contribution of these mystics to our subject was the association of their great love for Jesus with the Blessed Sacrament, an association, however, with which they never rested content until they had interiorized it. 'Swiftly, swiftly convey it to the heart, for it is the heart's true food,' cried Catherine of Genoa when she saw the Host: and one day after Communion it seemed to Teresa that her 'soul was really one with the most Holy Body of our Lord.' Even at the Elevation Angela 'felt Christ verily within' her soul, while Gertrude the Great managed to arrive at a high idea of Spiritual Communion. I believe that Madame Guyon alone of this group refers to devotions performed before the Reserved Sacrament; but even these she was

able to interiorize, for she turns the Sacrament into a type of her mystical states. 'We must annihilate ourselves and give place to Him in the same way as the Substance of the Bread gives place to Him at the words of consecration.' This quietistic interpretation is, however, unusual. 'It kindles love as through love He instituted it,' says Angela, and while the love aroused led them oftentimes to imitate the bodily sufferings of our Lord, it led them also to the idea of self-sacrifice through service. On approaching the altar St. Gertrude thought she heard Christ say: 'I will clothe Myself with your person, in order that I may be able to extend My Hand to sinners.' The lives of S.S. Catherine of Sienna and Genoa and St. Teresa especially were one long strenuous labour, roused and maintained entirely through their communions. It seems as if some act of concentration is required, in which the soul gathers together all its powers, before it can effect an entry into the spiritual world. Gazing at a bright light, or even the self-infliction of a sharp stab of pain, may serve the purpose, but those who concentrate their powers on some such act as Communion are more likely to reproduce the Christian life when the ecstasy has passed.

I would pick out from this group St. Catherine of Genoa and associate with her *Jan Ruysbroeck* (1293—1381) as perhaps the two greatest Catholic mystics. Their importance here lies in the fact that they thoroughly combined the two strains of Eucharistic mysticism so far detected in our survey, the philosophical and the devotional. In them, the relation between the soul and the Absolute appears as a love and not a knowledge relation. Morover, there is no longer any talk of our *substance* being changed into Christ's *substance*. Instead we find Ruysbroeck saying: 'the measureless *Love* which is God Himself and dwells in the pure deeps of our spirit like a burning brazier of coals must be made to enkindle heart and senses, will and desire,' till passing 'through all the powers of the soul,' the soul is fitted at last for final union with God. This laying hold of Love by love, he continues, is done through symbols and sacraments and deep prayer: and he goes on finely, 'every time we think with love of the Well-Beloved, He is anew our meat and drink.' The two modes of union here mentioned, thought and Sacrament, Ruysbroeck calls the modes of reason. But the

final union is 'beyond the reason,' where knowledge is turned into love. This is mysticism at its best: the philosophical trend in it purifies the personal attachment to Jesus from anything like sickly sentiment and puts the Sacrament in its proper place as the means to an end; while the devotional element infuses warmth into the philosophical. Mystics of this type address the Goal of all their longings, both in sacramental and spiritual communion, no longer personally but super-personally: they apostrophize Love and not the heavenly Lover. Thus: 'O great Love greater than the sea': 'O Beauty ancient and ever new.' Nevertheless, they do not lose sight of Him who in the Eucharist is the centre and inspiration of it all, as Jacopone da Todi reveals in one of his greatest poems, when he drops in one word from the super-personal to the personal: 'Love, Love, O *Jesu*, I have found the Goal.'

Of the same school as Ruysbroeck (Friends of God, as they were called) one other mystic must be mentioned, *Henry Suso* (1300-65). He, quite definitely, in his only extant Eucharistic writing—a meditation on the *Sursum Corda*—brings nature mysticism into relationship with the Sacrament. At the words 'Lift up your hearts' his voice betrayed such fervour that those who heard him celebrate were moved to peculiar devotion. In that moment his intention (to use the technical word) was the whole Creation. Birds of the air, beasts of the forest, fishes of the water, leaves and grass of the earth or the innumerable sand of the sea, specks of dust in the sunbeams, 'the sound of rain and bees murmuring'—all these were associated in his mind, together with captive, frivolous and distracted hearts, and borne upward in the flight of his soul to God. The whole effect is that of the conception of a symphony in the mind of some musical genius. Mozart, for example, tells us that when he was inspired he heard in his mind a whole symphony at once. Suso not only heard the music of the universe, but saw the performers all at once, fashioning as he says from his own heart's blood a sweetly-sounding instrument for each one of them on which they might send to our dear and gentle God a new and lofty strain of praise for ever. Such was the way in which at least one great mystic in mediaeval times gave dignity to Nature: she partook of the Sacrament with him.

So far as I know, the Catholic mystics have made no fresh contribution to the subject of Eucharistic mysticism since the fourteenth century. By that time there were already well advanced a number of mystical movements away from the Church, these having received their first inspiration from *Joachim of Flora* (*ob.* 1202), the voluntarily de-abbotted abbot who, at the bottom of a well, imbibed a new kind of apocalypticism. Omitting, however, further anti-sacramental developments within the Roman Church, some of them extraordinarily sane and fascinating,[3] I pass on to Protestant mysticism, which may be treated very summarily for the reason that it gives a far less place than Catholic mysticism to the Eucharist.

Jacob Boëhme (1575—1624) inherited something of the Eckhart tradition through *Caspar Schwenkfeld* (? 1519—61), the first Protestant mystic, and *Valentine Weigel* (1533—88), and combined with it a beautiful nature mysticism. But in place of the mediaeval Eucharistic devotion we have bewildering notions of astrology and alchemy. His disciple, *Angelus Silesius*, developed the devotional side, and blended with the inheritance he received from Boëhme some 'mild decoctions of Solomon's Song,' some of them now in our hymn books, but the effort landed him in Romanism.

The great speculative mystical tradition was continued in the seventeenth century, in England, by the *Cambridge Platonists*. *John Smith* (1618—52) and *Henry More* (1614—87) within this group, and *Thomas Trahearne* outside it, each expounded a real nature mysticism, but these, like *Wordsworth*, loved the Church and her Sacraments primarily for the sake of the 'decent order and grandeur' they embodied. *Whichcote* (1609—83) says plainly that the sacramental elements are only relatively holy because of their ends; they belong to a group of ordinances 'of a dispensable nature,' 'God's instruments' indeed, which, however, 'He might lay aside and make common again,' the regulation of which, being left undetermined by the Saviour, may be decided by 'Christian Prudence, Liberty, and Good Affection.' He inculcates 'frequency and careful attendance upon' the Sacrament, but insists that in the last resort it is not the Sacrament itself which sanctifies by its presence but the

[3] Notably Juan de Valdes and Antoinette de Bourignon.

moral colour, the humility, modesty, righteousness and so forth which its associations can impart to the mind. In other words, our 'Deification,' as he calls it in true mystic fashion, consists in a mental and moral transformation. All this is very clear and refreshing: we go straight back through Eckhart and the Neoplatonic Christian mystics to St. John. It is the Eternal Logos that we eat, says Henry More, and the Fathers ate the same in the wilderness, which is expounded 'in a marvellous passage of St. Paul.'

The Quakers stand very much in the same tradition, for, as Miss Gardner points out in her valuable book on the *History of Sacrament*, their anti-sacramentalism is positive rather than negative. The partaking of Christ's flesh and blood, says Barclay, is nowise limited to the ceremony of the Lord's Supper, 'but is truly and really enjoyed as often as the soul retires into the Light of the Lord and feels and partakes of the heavenly life . . . which (happens) more particularly when (the faithful) are assembled together to wait upon the Lord.' Here we have the idea of a Communion at once spiritual and social, but dissociated from Christian institutions and even from an actual knowledge of the life and work of Christ. This is its weakest point.

In the same century, however, the emphasis on the personal relationship with Jesus was renewed in a group of Anglican mystical poets. In them and their descendants we find again a beautiful devotion to the Sacrament.

> 'Love is that liquor, sweet and most divine,
> Which my God feels as Blood, but I as wine.'

So *George Herbert*. Or again *Francis Quarles*:

> 'He is mine altar: I His holy place:
> I am His guest: and He my living Food:
> I'm His by penitence: He mine by Grace:
> I'm His by purchase: He is mine by Blood:
> He's my supporting elm: and I His vine:
> Thus I my Best-Beloved's am: thus He is mine.'

The spirit of the Eucharistic mysticism of these Protestant High Churchmen, of whom at a later date *John Keble* was another example, has been finely captured in Shorthouse's description of the Holy Communion held in *Nicholas Ferrar's* Chapel at Little Gidding. Their Eucharistic language how-

ever was mostly the language of devotion—a sweet confused murmur. The Eucharist meant so much to them that they seem to have been unable or unwilling to put away completely all idea of change effected in the sacramental species. This hesitancy has been disastrous: it has prevented the Protestant mystics from making any original contributon to the evolution of Eucharistic mysticism: it is a serious blot even on the teaching of the greatest Protestant mystic, *William Law* (1686—1761), in whom the philosophical, the devotional, the Eucharistic, and the nature lines of mysticism all meet.

I could quote many fine Eucharistic passages from Law in the vein of the Cambridge Platonists, and I am sorry indeed to discredit him by giving you this disappointing one:

> 'The blood of Christ is the life of this world because it brings forth and generates from itself the paradisaical immortal flesh and blood as certainly, as really, as the blood of fallen Adam brings forth and generates . . . . the sinful, vile, corruptible flesh and blood of this life. . . . Would you know which blood this is . . . ? It is that blood which is to be received in the Holy Sacrament. . . . No figurative meaning of the words is here to be sought for; we must eat Christ's flesh and blood in the same reality as He took upon Him real flesh and blood of the Blessed Virgin. . . . This is the adorable height and depth of this Divine Mystery, which brings Heaven and Immortality again into us and gives us power to become sons of God.'

All this; in spite of the fact that Law says elsewhere that 'there is nothing supernatural in the whole system of our redemption. Every part of it has its ground in the workings and powers of nature, and all our redemption is only nature set right.' The two passages, however, are not so disconnected as they might seem. Law inherited from Boëhme some traces of the latter's curious view of nature mixed up with alchemy. The combination of this with his Eucharistic opinions is therefore not nearly so attractive as Suso's blend of Nature and Eucharistic mysticism: it causes him to materialize his otherwise spiritual conception of the Sacrament, while Suso's enabled him to spiritualize an otherwise material view of the Sacrament. The Eucharist could evidently be regarded by Law as a kind of Philosopher's Stone, or Tincture, for transforming that which it touched.

But in all the pronouncedly Eucharistic mystics we find a highly spiritual interpretation of the Sacrament tempered by a general acceptance of traditional dogma or current beliefs.

Among the latter I would refer particularly to the fact that until after Law's time the soul was conceived as a kind of substance. In the scheme of Dionysius the Eucharist serves a disciplinary purpose in setting free the soul for union with God, but this union when achieved is that of the soul substance with the Divine Substance. The mediaeval mystics, as we have seen, developed the idea of a personal union with God through love, but in spite of their superiority over Dionysius in this respect the idea of the substantial union still lingered, and was indeed made definitely materialistic through the influence of the Dogma of Transubstantiation. This latter influence disappeared completely from the Cambridge Platonists, who thus returned more nearly to the thought of Dionysius. The soul, says Henry More, is 'a spiritual or immaterial substance, whose seat is the fourth ventricle of the brain.'

The soul, of course, may be a substance for anything I know, but even if it is—and this is what I want to bring out—any 'substantial' union of the soul with God must be subsidiary to and included in the personal union, which is primarily a lifting up of the heart and mind to God. 'What is a man,' said Augustine, 'but his thoughts and loves?' The Cambridge Platonists are clear that this personal union is the one that matters most, but they do not give the Eucharist any great prominence as a means of effecting it. It may be, indeed, that once the magical element has been removed from the Eucharist it loses its unique power of inspiring intense personal devotion, a possibility that I am unwilling to admit. But it is quite certain that no great mystic has yet appeared with a passionate devotion to Christ and the Eucharist yet altogether free from the taint of magical sacramentalism. It is equally certain that if such an one is to come, Modernists alone can clear the ground for him to stand on.

If the approach to the subject were governed by the psychological method; a proper use made of the material from which I have given but a few selections; and if an adequate idea of symbolism were worked out on similar lines to those suggested by *R. L. Nettleship* in his fine essay on *Spirit*, then, I am sure, a new and massive, spiritual yet rational, Doctrine of the Eucharist could be constructed.

THE VALUE OF THE SACRAMENTS TO-DAY

By Canon T. Guy Rogers, M.C., B.D., Rector of Birmingham.

I REMEMBER that in the year 1920 at the Church Congress held at Southend Dr. Frere began his paper on *The Sacramental Experience* in the following way: 'Our blessed Lord instituted two Sacraments which we must observe according to His command. Therefore the first part of our experience of the Sacraments is the experience of obedience. We are doing what we are told. And that is a very great experience indeed.'

The paper that followed was a strongly-reasoned appeal to the plain, average, unemotional man to believe in and to take part in the sacramental life of the Church. The argument was steadily built up, but its basis was nothing else than obedience.

Perhaps this interested me more than other people, as I recognized that here was an Anglo-Catholic speaking precisely as the Evangelicals did, to whom I owed my own early religious training. The emotional experience which I was taught to look for, and, alas, very imperfectly found, in conversion, was never predicated of the Sacraments. The Evangelical doctrine of the Indwelling Christ radiated heat and light, but the Evangelical doctrine of the Sacraments was as cold as the North Pole. Curiously enough, the Pauline teaching of the Sacraments was never adjusted to the rest of the Pauline teaching with which I was saturated. Still, the Sacraments held their ground. They were prescribed by 'Holy Obedience'! In the course of time I was compelled to relate my Evangelical non-sacramental experience to the general sacramental experience of the Church. I effected some kind of fusion very different indeed from what an Anglo-Catholic would regard as satisfactory, but very satisfying to myself. The doctrine of the Indwelling Christ still remained central, but I found it illuminated and energized in the Holy Communion. I began to see that, while the Holy Communion could not create, it could always increase life. I no longer went for the sake of obedience alone, but for the sake of blessing.

But I cannot help wondering what would have become of me, if I had not the sheet-anchor of obedience to our Lord's command to hold me during the period when the non-sacramental elements in Christianity attracted me almost exclusively. I could easily have found satisfaction in such a form of Christianity, and looking back now I am glad that I did not. I should never have been spiritually big enough to survive its dangers! I am conscious that I owe a great deal, like Dr. Frere, to that particular anchor, and I am naturally concerned when I hear that it is drifting.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since 1920, and the assumption that our Lord instituted or sanctioned any Sacraments at all has been repeatedly questioned. The doctrinal basis of obedience—that we are doing 'what we were told to do'—has been re-examined, and we are warned by some that it has been shaken if not destroyed. I propose to deal with this question first (though within the limits of this paper my treatment of it must be brief), for I regard the historic value of the Sacraments as an important element in their valuation to-day.

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The Historical Value.

It need hardly be said at such a gathering as this that, however concerned we may be about maintaining a position intact, we cannot possibly take refuge in the face value of Scripture or unsifted Catholic tradition. If the evidence for the Dominical institution of the Sacraments is untrustworthy, we cannot buttress it by rhetoric or special pleading. The full impact of the historical study of the New Testament and of the origins of Christianity is now descending upon the institutional practices of the Church. It was bound to do so. *Magna est veritas et praevalebit.* The things that cannot be shaken will remain. There is no other abiding comfort for us in this period of storm and stress.

Last year at this conference the Bishop of Birmingham summed up succinctly the evidence for the institution by our Lord Himself of the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, and apparently found it meagre. Opinions will vary, not with regard to the honesty of his statement, but with regard to its

judicial value. Study of the evidence produces a quite different effect upon myself, though it would be easy for a critic to assert that I am biassed by my original tendency to regard the Holy Communion as an obligation of obedience. I confess that when I read St. Paul's words: 'I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks He brake it and said: Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you: This do in remembrance of Me,' I am struck, not by their enigmatic character, but by the way in which they resemble a statement made on oath. The omission of the words 'This do in remembrance of Me' from the Synoptic narratives (granting that St. Luke's text is corrupt) is capable of many other explanations than that St. Paul's confident assertion was wrong. The universal practice of the early Church would seem to be more readily explained by reference to a command or intention on the part of Christ than by the influence of the mystery religions which as far as Christianity is concerned belonged, I believe, to a later date.

Since Dr. Barnes read his paper, however, the evidence has again been carefully gone over and the subject, both in relation to Baptism and to the Holy Communion, discussed at length by Mr. N. P. Williams in the volume *Essays Catholic and Critical*. The volume marks an epoch in the history of the Anglo-Catholic movement, and ought to receive a welcome from all who, like us, believe that the acceptance of the historical method is as incumbent upon Catholic as Protestant Christianity. There can be no going back for Anglo-Catholics where these men have led the way. The view of Authority, Miracles, the Resurrection, Grace, the Atonement will gradually be modified in accordance with the spirit of this book. It is of little consequence that some theories in it are more ingenious than convincing. Mr. Will Spens' theory, for example, that the celebration of the Eucharist is essential to give sacrificial significance to Calvary seems to me strangely far-fetched and unreal. Its logical deduction would seem to be that apart from the Eucharist our Lord's death was merely a judicial murder; apart from the action of the priest Calvary brings no benefit to the needy soul. 'Grace' is locked up, and once more the priest keeps the key.

But to return to Mr. Williams' essay on *The Origins of the Sacraments*. Quite rightly, I think, he lays stress upon the Dominical institution or sanction of the Sacraments as the only really satisfactory basis for their use in the Christian Church. I have never been able to feel, though I do not know whether Mr. Williams would agree with me, that there is anything specifically Christian about what is called 'The Sacramental Principle.' Dr. Carnegie's strong statement in his essay on 'Grace in Sacrament,' to be found in the volume *Towards Reunion*, seems to be justified: 'There is not in the Gospels or Epistles a single line which a scholastic theologian would place under the heading: De Sacramentis in genere.' Nay more, the two sacred rites which all Christians—with the exception of the Society of Friends, the Salvation Army and a few others—have accepted and observed as sacraments are never mentioned together, nor is it in any way suggested that they are institutions of the same kind illustrating some common 'sacramental principle.' The authority of Dominical institution or sanction cannot be replaced by the authority of this principle.

It cannot be said, I think, that Mr. Williams' essay, so admirable in the marshalling of the evidence on behalf of Dominical institution, adds anything that is positively new. It would probably be impossible to do so. It is still a question of believing what I might call the sworn statement of St. Paul, backed by the custom of the early Church—evidence good enough for me but apparently not for others.

Mr. Williams does indeed make a heroic attempt to provide another logion of our Lord authorizing the Holy Communion, which may take the place of the words 'This do in remembrance of me' if they are dislodged by criticism. He quotes our Lord's words at the Last Supper: 'Verily, I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.' Rejecting the usual eschatological interpretation, he claims it boldly as an enigmatic prophecy of the Eucharist, paraphrasing our Lord's words to His disciples as follows:

> 'This is the last of those prophetic actions whereby I have endeavoured to impress upon you, through type and shadow, the glories of that future "Messianic banquet" which will be shared by the elect in the "Kingdom of God." The next time that we meet together on

such an occasion as this, I shall still be the Host, though present invisibly, and not in tangible form. But the next celebration of this Feast will not be, as this is, a provisional and anticipated transaction of the sacramental mystery; it will be the *mystery itself,* consummated in the Kingdom of God, that is, in My Church, which in its universalized or Catholic form will be constituted by virtue of the great events which lie before us, My death and resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Ghost.'

It is perhaps hardly fair to Mr. Williams to quote the conclusion without the intervening steps in the argument. My apology must be lack of space. But there is some advantage in presenting thus baldly our Lord's logion with Mr. Williams's paraphrase. A man may well ask in perplexity how did this come out of that? The whole Catholic system seems to be produced by sleight of hand from a single sentence. If it is to be a question of probabilities the plain man will not hesitate to assert that Schweitzer is nearer the truth. The sentence, whatever may be its meaning, has an eschatological ring and belongs clearly to a group of such sentences the relation of which to the rest of our Lord's teaching is still an unsolved problem. It is impossible to cut it out like a beast from the herd and to attach it to another group intrinsically different. To identify the Kingdom of God with the Church, and the Messianic banquet with the Eucharist on the strength of this logion, which Mr. Williams himself describes as mysterious, is singularly unconvincing. Mr. Williams, who apparently attaches great importance to this particular piece of evidence, has I think really weakened his case by it. Critics will be quick to say that he recognized that his case needs strengthening, and to show that he has not found it where he sought it.

We must still stand upon the 'sworn' statement of Paul supporting the general probabilities of the situation. Here, indeed, Mr. Williams is on stronger ground when he does not hesitate to stress the value of a judgment resting on Probability. 'Mathematical Irresistibility' is not to be thought of in our intellectual or moral judgments; the most that we can do is to build upon probability. Such probability, I agree with him, exists with regard to our Lord's institution or sanction of the use of the two Sacraments which we are considering.[1]

[1] Possibly the word sanction or encouragement is all that can be applied to Baptism. The logion ('Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel

I desire to emphasize this point because there is a tendency, as soon as the element of doubt arises, to seek some other basis from which it is thought doubt may be excluded or which may be independent of historical facts altogether. But a Christianity which rests on no historical facts is unrecognisable, and once history is appealed to, judgment by probability cannot be excluded.

If the balance of evidence is really against Dominical institution, no doubt quite as strong a case can be made out for discarding the Sacraments altogether as for making use of them as illustrations of some general sacramental principle. I do not quite know what Dr. Barnes, for whose fearless thinking I have profound respect, means when he says that if we should accept the conclusion that the Sacrament of the Holy Communion was not instituted by our Lord there is still no change in 'the value of the rite.' Certainly the historical value is affected; certainly the experience of obedience is gone — that experience from which some of us built up a fuller experience in the course of time. There must also, I think, be grave loss in the loosening of the links with Calvary. Nor do I really understand what he means when he says that 'the traditional importance of the Holy Communion in our liturgy remains undiminished.' I always find myself in difficulties when I come up against the word 'traditional,' owing probably to the fact that I was educated in Protestant circles in Ireland, where the word traditional was used as the antithesis of Scriptural! 'Traditional importance' to my mind (now corrupted or enlightened!) suggests an importance based upon some connection with our Lord—a command —a consent or an interpretation of His mind. There are plenty of unwarranted traditions, more properly, I think, called accretions, to be found in the development of the Catholic Church, but a genuine tradition must surely base its claim to importance upon the authority of our Lord. I am therefore at some loss to understand how 'traditional use' is to be accepted as an efficient

to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost') at the close of St. Matthew's Gospel can hardly be regarded as first-hand evidence. The evidence rests largely on the reasonable assumption that Peter was not misinterpreting the mind of Christ on the Day of Pentecost and on the recognized teaching and practice of the early Church. It is fully set out in Mr. Williams' essay.

substitute for Dominical sanction. The one presupposes the other, and without it is worthless.

It will be seen, therefore, that as regards the value of the Sacraments to-day I still feel that the proper starting point is the value which the Lord gave to them, or, if that is putting the case too strongly, at least the value which He sanctioned or encouraged. Even though it may be urged that conclusive proof is not forthcoming, high probability is still a reasonable foundation. I prefer it as a basis to that of 'undifferentiated religious experience.' To endeavour to re-establish the value of the Sacraments, once deprived of Dominical support, on grounds mainly of experience, opens the way to every kind of development in Catholic Christianity, whether true or not, which claims to be spiritually helpful. I feel that Dr. Barnes is on slippery ground when he writes: 'Why should we break with our past, especially when all must admit that the Holy Communion has quickened true devotion to Christ in countless numbers of His followers?' But this is precisely the argument of those who desire to see the Adoration of the Reserved Sacrament re-established within the Church of England. The claim is always made that it quickens true devotion to Christ in His followers. But the question of Truth is paramount. It is as impossible, I think, for a historical religion like Christianity in making its valuation of the Sacraments to set aside the question, Does Christ will the Sacraments? as it is to set aside the question, Does Christ will to be adored in a pyx?

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I have spent a considerable time, I am afraid, in dealing with this question of the origin of the Sacraments, not only on account of the present controversy, but because I believe Dominical sanction represents the first link in the chain of spiritual experience which unites our own with the Apostolic age. Each link in the chain counts for something in estimating or revising the value of Sacraments to-day. It is not possible for me, nor is it part of the task allotted to me, to trace the history of the Church's sacramental experience. It has already been discussed at this conference under appropriate epochs. I am only concerned with emphasizing that there is a historical

value as well as the psychological value, which is universally admitted. We cannot divest ourselves of our historical sense in appreciating the value of the Sacraments to-day.

This is not in the least to admit that the New Testament is everywhere equally a guide to the mind or intention of Christ. Nor does it mean that the experience of the Church has always been free from alien and pagan influences. I should not be surprised to find it proven that sacramental teaching was coloured by contact with Mystery Religions in the second or third centuries, though I do not think the charge has been proved against St. Paul. I should certainly be sorry to seem to suggest that Cyril of Alexandria and all that he stands for is in the legitimate line of development from the Apostolic tradition! There is a great deal of revising to be done in formulating the value of the Sacraments, but it must be done in relation to the whole historical background, and not as if they presented merely a metaphysical or psychological problem.

I might also add that it is equally important that the historical 'foreground' should be kept in mind. The Church is a growing organism. It is young yet. Many of the diseases from which it suffers, to remedy which we call in the aid of so many learned doctors, will be regarded one day as infantile disorders about which an unaccountable fuss seems to have been made. Many of our 'epoch making' books, such as *Liberal Evangelicalism* and *Essays Catholic and Critical*, will need to be annotated if they are to be understood!

It is as essential that the value of the Sacraments for *to-morrow* should be kept in mind as well as their value for yesterday if we are rightly to estimate their value for to-day. We sometimes imagine, when we speak of the chain of experience, that we hold the last link in our own hands, and we hasten to join the ends and make the circle complete. Hence the regrettable cocksureness of our conclusions and the absurd air of finality with which we lay down what shall or shall not for ever be held in the Catholic Church. Some sense of the future as well as of the past is surely included in what we call the historical sense, and some real faith in future development as well as in past experience must be included in the Church's doctrine of inspiration. The Sacraments, in so far as they form part of

the institutional life of the Church as a growing organism, are always liable to modification in externals. Their usefulness to-day is largely conditioned by their adaptability to the needs of to-morrow.

The first element, then, that I would lay stress on in estimating the value of Sacraments to-day is the historical one. They maintain the institutional life of the Church, preserve its continuity and bind its members together. It is often said that the Gospel creates the Church. I think that is true, but it creates it not of free choice but of necessity. The rise of the Church is implicit in the phrase 'One is your Master and all ye are brethren,' and explicit in the commission 'As your Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' Fellowship lies at the heart of Christ's method of working, and the Church is the fellowship of Christ's disciples in action. In this connection the two Sacraments have always held, and presumably will always hold, their place as admitting to membership and preserving it. Their close connection with preserving and maintaining the Church's membership throughout the ages gives them a unique historical importance. So long as the institutional life of the Church remains something to be valued, the historic value of the Sacraments will continue.

There lies, of course, an assumption in this particular valuation of the Sacraments that the Church itself as an institution is worth preserving. I do not think you will ask me to argue this. Destroy this temple, as we know it, and in three days it would rise again. The Gospel demands an organization to express itself—it comes to life in discipleship—it must have a Body through which to make its impact upon the world. There has often been much loose talk about the decay of institutional religion. Who ever seriously supposes that we could carry on or were ever intended to carry on without a corporate life of some kind? Granted that we stand urgently in need of more humanity, more elasticity, more love; granted that we have much to be ashamed of as well as much to be proud of; granted that we have sometimes in the past seemed to be in alliance with the kingdom of darkness rather than the kingdom of light, the Church still stands as an institution capable of serving the widest interests of humanity. Probably in this country at any

rate the Church is now more effective than it has been for many generations. The Sacraments, in short, preserve what is worth preserving.

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The Theological Valuation.

When we pass from a historical to a theological valuation we enter upon a field where controversy has been much more prolonged. Nor is complete agreement in the near future to be expected. Are the Sacraments to be regarded as declaratory or effective? What is the relation of the two parts? Does the outward express 'a spiritual reality or situation already existing,' as the Protestant maintains, or does 'the outward bring about a spiritual reality or situation which comes into existence only through the outward means,' as the Catholic asserts? The issue is stated in this way in Canon Quick's admirable chapter on the doctrine of the Sacraments contained in his book *Protestant and Catholic Elements in Christianity*. Faced with such an alternative (though I object on principle to being impaled on the horns of a dilemma) I should declare myself a sturdy Protestant, even if the difference be, as Canon Quick asserts in the last analysis, one of emphasis only. I hold that spiritual life could be sustained without the Sacraments, though personally I should be conscious of an act of disobedience (of how many are we guilty every day?), loss of fellowship and mystical experience if I lived without them. But there is no particular quality of grace which is confined to the Sacraments and to the Sacraments alone. The real Presence is no more objective in the Holy Communion than it is in the heart of the believer. Christ is as really present where two or three are gathered together in His Name for work or witness as when they meet to remember His sacrifice on Calvary. The whole conception of Sacraments as channels of grace needs revision in the light of such books as Dr. Oman's *Grace and Personality*, and such essays as that of the late Mr. Emmet's on *The Psychology of Grace*. There still lingers in so many minds the thought of grace as a fluid which is stored up in a particular reservoir and conveyed to the community through a particular set of pipes. We need to remember that our relations with God through Christ are always personal,

and that He can only help us as moral beings through reinforcing our personalities in the same way as Christ did those of His disciples.

Provided that this is borne in mind, we may be prepared to find in the Holy Communion a richer and more satisfying experience than in any other way by which God through Christ 'graciously' finds His way into our personalities. The solemn associations with Calvary, the mystical lifting up before our minds of Christ crucified for our redemption, the symbols of His love, the gifts received by faith, the fellowship with the disciples all contribute to give a unique significance to the service which carries us far beyond the primary experience of obedience. There are many who in strange places and suffering much from the vagaries and idiosyncrasies of particular clergy rejoice that the ministry of the Sacrament is less easily made ineffective than the ministry of the Word. Even in a dead church where it is difficult to find God making a gracious approach through any loving personality, it is possible to find some comfort in the Holy Communion.

It is only when in some narrow and rigid sense the Sacraments are interpreted as 'generally necessary to salvation' that serious clash between the Protestant and Catholic view may be expected. Controversy is always serious when it concerns itself with the nature of God. Sometimes I cannot recognise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ behind the compact ecclesiastical, water-tight system of salvation set out in certain Catholic quarters. I am glad to get back to the parable of the Prodigal Son.

If the phrase 'generally necessary to salvation' means that no man can be saved in isolation, and that the Sacraments declare that only in fellowship with God and man can such salvation be achieved, then certainly no Protestant, certainly no Modern Churchman, can take exception to them. But if it is to be interpreted in such a way that Quakers are to be consigned to the uncovenanted mercies of God, or to be defended on the plea of invincible ignorance, then the phrase is one which might with credit be omitted from the new Prayer Book.

It is not to be supposed, however, that those who hold the declaratory view deny the reality of a gift from God in and

through the Sacraments. They only deny differentiation in the nature of grace. God takes the initiative whether in response to prayer or in the approach to Him through the Sacraments, and confers the appropriate gift upon the receptive personality. The effect of Communion or of prayer is to be explained neither by auto-suggestion nor mass feeling except in a very secondary sense. We pray as Christians because we believe, on Christ's authority, that there is a Heavenly Father who hears our prayers. We are not hypnotising ourselves. We are conversing with a Personality. Similarly in regard to Communion, we are not, except incidentally, kindling religious emotion; we are approaching God through Christ to receive the blessing which it is part of His very nature to bestow. The Divine initiative is fundamental to any Christian theory of the Sacraments. Whether we incline to the view that they are declaratory symbols of God's very nature revealed in Christ which freely gives itself, always, everywhere, to all who seek, or whether we regard them as the necessary means by which 'a work of grace' is wrought in the soul, it is equally essential to believe that God does really give Himself to man. Both views imply that before we start to seek God He has started out to meet us; before we are conscious of our need He makes provision for it; before we find Him we are found of Him.

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The Human Valuation.

Finally, I would add a word with regard to the human valuation of the Sacraments, which often receives scant attention owing to the controversial atmosphere in which, unfortunately, so much of our thinking and writing is done. I remember Dr. Glover quoting an old story of 410 or 412 A.D. at the Mürren Conference. A new Governor came out to Tripoli and began to exploit the people, and Bishop Synesius wrote to him and said:

> 'You treat a man as if he were cheap. Man is not a cheap thing, but a precious thing, for whom Christ died.'

The Sacraments testify to the world the value that the Christian religion sets on man. God calls him to Himself, communicates to him His own divine nature, spreads for him His feast of love. He does not do so in virtue of any particular position, wealth,

prestige, power or education which the particular man possesses, but just because he is man. This is the point which Canon C. C. Bell emphasized so well at the Church Congress at Sheffield :

> 'The basis of the sacramental idea is the supreme value of man to God. Sacramentalism is the religion of unwavering optimism concerning humanity. Starting with the conviction that man was made for the highest possible end and purpose, namely, union with God, it proceeds to assure man that from the cradle to the grave he is surrounded by the divinely ordained means for the achievement of this end and for the removal of all obstacles thereto. Baptism, the sacrament of initiation, at once meets this human instinct with the assurance of God's sense of the ineffable value and worth of human nature. . . . The Christian is baptized primarily because God wants him, and not because he wants God.'

The social significance of this valuation of the Sacraments is still very imperfectly laid upon the consciences of Christian people. Outside the circle of our own family and friends the value that we set upon humanity is often very low. Pessimism rather than unwavering optimism is a common attitude when men are separated from us by inferior education, class distinction, or a colour bar. The Sacraments do stand for a view of life which must sometimes bring up into conflict with what are called economic laws and patriotic aspirations. The Christian cannot regard any man as 'cheap.' He means too much to God. Hence all that concerns him—his housing, his standard of living, his work and wages, his recreation and his worship—counts a great deal. The Christian cannot willingly accustom himself to think of class or national or race distinctions as providing barriers impervious to Christian fellowship. For him there is but 'one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all Who is above all and through all and in you all.'

There is no greater service that the Church could render to the world to-day, distracted as it is with industrial struggles and national animosities, than to preach and to present to it in practice the social consequences of its own sacramental faith. The world needs the doctrine of the Fatherhood if it is ever to achieve courage to practise brotherhood. It needs the Christian valuation of man if it is to resist exploitation. It needs the experience of corporate life in Christ if it is to work out its own salvation.

THE MISUSE OF THE SACRAMENTS

By Canon H. A. Wilson, Rector and Rural Dean of Cheltenham.

THE title of my subject suggests to me that you desire a somewhat popular treatment as a relaxation from what has gone before.

One cannot approach satisfactorily the consideration of the mis-use of the Sacraments without preliminary enquiry, such as, what is their proper use, and what is their proper place in the Gospel system? These in turn require a consideration of what the Gospel system is. Large questions of this kind cannot receive more than slight reference, but a few sentences are essential.

Jesus, in His life and teaching, gave the world an entirely new view of God and of His disposition to humanity. The Gospel, which is the totality of His teaching and revelation, declares the nearness and accessibility of a God, Whom He taught us to call Our Father. For full and complete fellowship with Himself God requires a state of heart and a direction of will which results in sorrow for sin, and also an unfaltering trust in His love. His grace is freely and lavishly bestowed, it flows by the roadside on every common path of life. If the gate which leads to Life is found narrow, it is not because God has made it so by exacting requirements. There is no precise method of approach to Him, nor any 'official process' necessary to obtain pardon or renewal. Indeed so simple and easy to grasp is the purpose and will of God for His people that the child-mind, with its simplicity and blind trust, is the indispensable thing for those who would enter the Kingdom. This view of God is unmistakably a characteristic principle of the Gospel.

There are two essential spiritual experiences in the life of every believer, so our Lord taught: the new beginning, when by an act of choice a man chooses God and denies self; and the nourishing and strengthening of that new life, when it is born. At these two vital points the Sacraments appear. They were given to emphasize those two supreme truths, to focus them to a definite point of time and action, to give a visible guarantee that

the grace sought had really been imparted. The New Testament perspective seems to be that the Sacraments are designed to throw up into relief the New Birth and the Nourishment of the Spiritual Life, lest they should shade off into vague unreality, to give them definite outline, and to afford tangible proof to the senses that the invisible Gift has certainly been given and received. The Sacraments are thus the ministers of two supreme spiritual experiences. That is the New Testament order of things, which we must be most careful to preserve.

In other words, the whole value of the Sacraments depends, according to these principles, upon the inward response. God is willing to give, but He can only give to the soul which is competent to receive, and that competency is proved by faith. His goodwill towards us can only be effective in the medium of faith. There were places where the Incarnate Christ could do no mighty works because of unbelief. Similarly with the Sacraments, they do not operate upon passive or inert subjects who make no response to the offer of blessing. Consequently, the subjective side of the Sacraments (which always have the covenant character) must be essential in any Scriptural view of them. It is not true to say that it is the only side, but the absence of the subjective element evacuates the Sacrament of all value and efficacy and the over-emphasis of the objective side introduces a magical and mechanical conception of the Sacraments which has no kinship whatever with Christian principles. A man may press with his teeth the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, but without a living faith he has not received the Gift.

Now the moral value of this truth can hardly be over-stated. There is an attractiveness about the blunt statement of the objective character of the Presence in the Eucharist because it is so easily expressed and grasped. On the contrary, there is difficulty in expressing and grasping the truth that a living faith is essential before God's will to bless can operate, and that the communicant receives either remission of his sins and all other benefits of Christ's Passion or nothing at all according to whether he has or has not faith. Herein lies the most serious objection to the theory of the Sacrament which identifies the Gift with the elements. Theologically it is unsatisfactory, for it does overthrow the nature of a Sacrament, despite elaborate reasoning to

the contrary. It destroys the parallel between Baptism and Holy Communion by necessitating a third element in the latter, instead of the two elements, the outward sign and the inward grace. But these considerations are far outweighed by the grave objection that crude and popular expressions of the extreme Anglo-Catholic view of the Presence in the Elements suggest that a mechanical reception of the Elements secures the Gift, whereas New Testament principles clearly indicate that man's trustful will to receive is no less essential than God's all-loving will to give.

We have already noted that the two Sacraments centre around two vital Christian experiences, and that they are intended to give visible proof of an invisible transaction. The visible thing is very much simpler to grasp than the profound invisible truth to which it ministers, and it is the commonest thing to-day to find the whole Christian system inverted by the wholly wrong proportion which the Sacraments fill in the teaching and preaching of Christianity. It is nothing short of startling to find how comparatively slight (judged simply by the space occupied) is the place which the Sacraments hold in the New Testament, and this fact should be a constant deterrent against a mis-use of the Sacraments which puts them in a position which they ought not to occupy in the general scheme of the Gospel.

We hear, for instance, the expression 'sacramental grace' in continual use. Now the implication that there is some peculiar and characteristic grace attached to the Sacraments, like the special efficacy which attaches to some drug, is a gross view contrary to the whole spirit of the New Testament. It is an expression designed to give a fictitious importance to these two particular means of grace. No one disputes that they are means of grace and that they possess a visible guarantee of grace received, but that by non-sacramental means of grace, like prayer, Bible reading or meditation, we receive one class of grace (and that a lower one), and by Baptism and Holy Communion we receive another type of grace is, quite frankly, without justification in either Scripture or common-sense.

But there is a much more serious divergence from Christian principles in the next stage of development of this view. We are informed, not only that this sacramental grace is essential for our

spiritual life, but that one of the sacraments is a quasi-miraculous ceremony which can only be performed by a priestly caste who have received this power by some particular endowment which makes them 'earthly agents of the Great High Priest.'

It is hard to imagine a mis-use of the Sacraments which comes more into collision with the Gospel spirit than a theory which makes it the vehicle of an essential spiritual blessing, and at the same time puts the conveyance of that blessing into the hands of a special caste of men. The old brutal line of reasoning is now rarely heard: No Bishop, no priest; no priest, no Sacrament; no Sacrament, no assured salvation. It is framed to-day in much more respectable language, but it is only the old view thinly disguised. We hear of 'valid Sacraments' as if there was a precise *technique* in spiritual things, of the 'precarious character' of non-episcopal ministries, and of 'uncovenanted blessings' which God, out of infinite love, bestows upon people who, through ignorance or perversity, have not kept the rules.

There is nothing the least like this in the teaching of our Lord. It is a re-crudescence of non-Christian ideas, an intrusion into the teaching of Christ of a view of grace and priesthood which is hardly more than semi-Christian.

It is, of course, necessary in the interests of decency and order to commit the celebration of the Eucharist, which is an act of the whole Church, into the hands of officers and representatives of the Christian community. But it is non-Christian to regard Christian ministers as trustees of an indispensable grace, put into their trusteeship by God, Who under this theory becomes virtually a *roi fainéant*. Such a view cuts at the root of the Gospel principle of free grace.

Of the same nature is the mis-use of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, which regards prayer offered at that time as possessing a peculiar potency. I am not referring to the fact that the whole atmosphere of the service awakens in every responsive heart a deep realization of the Presence of God which finds expression in prayer of the most fervent kind. Everyone prizes those sacred moments before and after reception. All this is thoroughly wholesome.

I refer, rather, to the view which suggests that in some way God is more propitious to prayer at the Holy Communion than

to prayer offered at any other time. This is based upon that theory of the Presence which teaches that Christ is nearer or more accessible then than at other times, and partly upon the view that the Sacrament is a sacrificial ceremony which propitiates Divine wrath.

This unhealthy view easily passes into an error of the first magnitude: a quotation will make my point clear. I make no apology for referring to a fifth-rate writing like a 'John Bull Tract,' for this is the spiritual pabulum which is being given 'by the million,' we are told, to certain of our Church-folks. No doubt, the clergy of the fashionable Church where I obtained the tract accept responsibility for the literature they encourage their flocks to read.

In urging that a Christian can only pray properly at the 'daily Mass,' the writer says:

> 'To kneel down by one's bedside and discharge petitions into the empty air is not, in any real sense, "the lifting up of the heart and mind to God": it is, doubtless, not without its reward, but it falls a long way short of any serious notion of prayer, and it is extraordinarily hard to keep up, wanting as it is in any clear idea of the Father we are addressing or the requests we are bringing before Him. If that were all mankind understood by prayer, prayer would have been given up long ago.'

It would be difficult to imagine anything more mischievously untrue, or more plainly contradicted by our Lord's own mouth than this pitiful disparagement of private prayer in the supposed interests of the Holy Communion. To enter into the secret chamber and shut the door and pray to our Father in secret, which our Lord enjoined, is 'damned with faint praise' and in its place is put daily attendance at Mass. Our Anglo-Catholic pamphleteer says that those who obey our Lord's injunction fall short of any serious notion of prayer, and that we cannot pray properly in the place where our Lord ordered, but only under circumstances about which He gave no such command.

But important though all these matters are, the storm-centre in the Church at the moment is that group of questions which collect around the subject of Reservation. I say 'group of questions' because no one who has given any attention to the subject can deny that it is impossible to consider the subject of Reservation in detachment from a number of other questions.

About Reservation for the sick, there could not be any serious dispute; few, if any people, could seriously argue that it is an inexpedient or wrong thing *in itself*. But unfortunately, when the consideration of Reservation for the sick is embarked upon it is found that all kinds of questions in grave dispute among us arise, questions which touch our divergent root principles. The apparently innocent practical query arises: 'Where is the Reserved Sacrament to be deposited?' If in Church, may individuals say their private prayers before it? If individuals may do so, may collective acts of worship be held before it? May others than sick persons be communicated from the Reserved Sacrament? And behind all these, as everyone who goes into the question will quickly discover, lies the age-long controversy as to the nature of Christ's Presence in the Eucharist and the relation of that Presence to the Elements.

It is really the doctrine of the Eucharistic Presence which is being challenged by the whole of this controversy. If it is believed that Christ is localized in any particular spot, or 'comes' in a local sense at any particular moment, the door is at once opened to practices before the Reserved Sacrament of a highly questionable character. It is happily outside my province to discuss the meaning of the Real Presence (a phrase which probably no one of us would discard), and I have no desire to attack a certain interpretation of that phrase which (though I dissent from it) can be expressed in dignified and reverent terms, whose supporters would oppose firmly any extra-liturgical use, privately or publicly, of the Elements. But it is beyond dispute that in much of the popular literature of the extreme Anglo-Catholic party a view is presented which is not only crude and materialistic but calculated to foster the most deplorable mis-use of the Sacrament. I feel bound to say that holding those extreme views, the Anglo-Catholic is, in my judgment, perfectly logical in saying, 'That spot in the Church where the Reserved Elements are deposited is the place where I want to say my prayers, nay, more, I want to go there and worship the Christ there present.' I do not see how you can reasonably expect such people to refrain from using the Elements in that way if facilities for such religious exercises are given them. Nor do I think that it is unjustifiable for such people to use the kind of remark which

we hear with increasing frequency, 'This church is a more hallowed place than that church, for in this church Christ is present as He is not in that.'

In a certain famous Anglo-Catholic church I came across a number of annotated Communion books which had just been used at a children's Mass. The note interpolated before the Consecration Prayer read thus, 'Hush; children, Jesus is coming!' After the Consecration this was added, 'Jesus has come! bow down and worship Him.' Put people who have been instructed along these lines in a church where access to the Reserved Sacrament is possible, and it is quite plain how they will act.

Those who have read the report of the Farnham Conference will remember how two of the speakers gave illustrations of the grossly superstitious opinions which easily gather around that theory of the Presence which locates it in the Elements. Again I say this is not surprising. Such views invite error. There is something peculiarly alluring about the short and easy way which this kind of teaching offers to a clergyman anxious to see results. I can well believe that the dramatic impression which invests it is most effective, and that the draped corner in the church with its little red light dimly burning, has a most awe-inspiring effect upon many. As one whose constant duty is teaching, I am perfectly certain that the task of instructing a congregation, if creating impressions at any cost is aimed at, is made very much simpler by employing things of this nature. There survives in all of us, from our savage ancestry, a sensitiveness to the mysterious, the weird and uncanny, and any play upon those feelings is sure to awaken a real response. But not only is it very doubtful whether robust and healthy religion can be built upon such a foundation, there is grave reason for thinking that disastrous results frequently follow. Bye-and-by the reaction comes and the recoil from *Aberglaube* frequently produces cynical agnosticism.

But have we any right, even if it produces certain results which are temporarily impressive, to allow that this use of the Elements is legitimate?

Apart altogether from any consideration of the nature of the Presence, it seems quite clear that the Presence in the Eucharist

is given for one purpose only, Communion. The whole sym bolism emphasizes that it is by the act of eating and drinkin that the benefits are appropriated and by that alone. The mor the language in *St. John* VI is regarded as referring to the Hol Communion, the more this argument seems to apply. Suc seems to be very clearly the whole meaning of the symbolis of the parallel between bodily hunger and thirst and spiritu need for strengthening. Any use of the Elements other than fo Communion is a development which can claim no Scriptura authority, and when judged by its results comes under grav suspicion.

In the book just referred to, Dr. Tait records a number c facts, of which the following are typical :

> 'In the church of a mission station in S. Africa, Reservation wa on an occasion omitted and some devout mission ladies said, "Wh did you take our Dear Lord away! we could not make our meditation."'
>
> 'A preacher in one of our churches used these words, "How sa it is that in the cathedrals of England Christ is only present at lon intervals and for short periods."'

I have no doubt that many Anglo-Catholics would repudiat gross opinions like these as vigorously as we should, but tha is not the point. By permitting the use of the Elements for an other purpose than that appointed by our Lord, facts prove tha the door is opened for gross and materialistic views of a paga character, and the true Christian view of the constant Presenc of the Lord in the hearts of His people is thrown into th background.

At the Farnham Conference, Rev. E. G. Selwyn said :

> 'The way to peace must assuredly lie in the candid recognition tha the Church of England permits different doctrines of the Eucharist t be held and taught within her borders, and that the resulting usage must be judged by the principles which are severally proper to each.'

Now it is quite true that there is no official doctrine of th Eucharist in our Church, and we should not regard with any thing but dismay any attempt to formulate precisely a doctrin which all must hold. Wide latitude is tacitly admitted. But th Church in its formularies carefully checks the resulting usages For instance, there was danger that the extreme Puritans migh treat the consecrated Elements with disrespect: hence it i provided that any remaining after administration shall be con

umed reverently in church. Similarly, those on the other wing re restrained by the Article which states, 'The Sacrament of he Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.'

I suggest that a departure from this policy is to be deprecated. Once the 'resulting usages' are permitted, dissension nd error would arise. Let us apply Mr. Selwyn's principle in way he hardly contemplates. Suppose the ultra-Protestant minority were to claim that inasmuch that they do not believe hat the Elements are other than ordinary bread and wine, therefore they are entitled to indulge in the resulting usage and consume them at an ordinary meal! The whole conscience of the est of the Church would be indescribably shocked. What right have the extreme Anglo-Catholics to indulge in usages which qually shock the conscience of the rest of the Church? What ny section of the Church does by authority, involves the whole n responsibility. It is not a question of toleration or charity at ll. Out of regard for the whole body, sections must be restrained from indulging in practices which, judged by their own ectional principles, may be quite logical. The way of peace nust assuredly lie in the perpetuation of the existing policy in he Church.

My last words must be occupied with a reference to an even deeper sense in which the Sacrament of Holy Communion may e mis-used. It can only be a brief reference, but it is necessary o the completeness of what I wish to say.

This Sacrament is mis-used if it is celebrated in such a way s to give an erroneous significance to it.

In the last forty years there has been revived in our Church a method of celebrating the Eucharist familiar to us all. The equipment of the celebrant, elevation of the Elements, prostration, and the general ritual adjuncts, are all designed to epresent the Sacrament as a propitiatory sacrifice. The whole setting suggests that the priest is in some sense offering Christ.

I notice that Mr. Will Spens in a recent essay makes this statement, 'A stranger present at the Eucharist would naturally describe it as a sacrificial rite.' Mr. Spens is of opinion that the stranger would have his answer endorsed from the study of the earliest narratives of its institution. I have very great respect

for Mr. Spens, but I differ from him here profoundly. It seem to me that the stranger would get the very opposite impressio from the New Testament narratives. If there is one thing cleare than another in those accounts it strikes me to be this, that sacri fice received its consummation and finality in Calvary and tha the Holy Communion is the feast commemorative of that Sacri fice. Indeed, when I read the mass of philosophical subtlety niceity of distinctions and ingenuity of interpretation which ar so often combined to support this kind of view, I always fee that no such methods would ever have been thought of, ha there not been a determination to arrive somehow or other at conclusion which had already been decided upon.

In his essay, Mr. Spens is anxious, while holding the sacri ficial view of the Eucharist, to deny that the sacrifice of the Mas contributes anything to the efficacy of Christ's death. That view he clearly repudiates. But I doubt if he sufficiently realizes tha the popular mind would not be able to follow his finely-drawn distinctions, which are not always clear to the trained mind. A typical worshipper viewing a celebration with the ceremonial t which I have referred, would most certainly regard it as a sacri fice and in precisely the sense which Mr. Spens deplores, an he would be warmly encouraged to do so from the popular litera ture and crude teaching put at his disposal.

A presentation of the Eucharist which has this effect upo the mind of the ordinary worshipper throws into complete con fusion the whole Gospel system as given us in the New Testament.

I cannot deny in face of what Mr. Spens says, that it is pos sible to hold a view of sacrifice in the Eucharist which woul make this charge unjust But it is not sufficiently realized tha the Lord's people may conceivably all be prophets, but they ar not all philosophers and theologians. To them any such lan guage as speaks of Christ as the 'Victim' in the Communion coupled with ritual acts all suggestive of sacrifice, would b interpreted in only one way: a way which I believe is a disas trous mis-use of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

THE ARTS IN RELATION TO THE SACRAMENTS

By the Rev. Leslie S. Hunter, M.A., Canon of Newcastle and Vicar-designate of Barking, Essex.

IN the theory and practice of worship, two lines of development are possible according as emphasis is laid on the fact of God or on the worshipper's sense and awareness of God. If the emphasis is upon the fact of God the point of focus will be what God is doing—'The Lord is in his holy Temple.' The perfect form of worship will make that overwhelming fact clear, and so bring about the right response in the worshipper; and the right response is not, 'Let us make the best of Him while He is here,' but, 'Let all the earth keep silence before Him'—'Come, let us adore Him.'

On this view worship is an end in itself. Men come together in worship not primarily to edify themselves, but to glorify God. It is an expression of love, not cupboard love. The underlying thought is that of the givenness of religion—God comes, God acts, God uplifts. The worshipper is not able to save himself, or of himself to offer God a worthy offering unless God gives him the gift to offer and the grace with which to offer it.

Protestantism does not necessarily differ from Catholicism in theory at this point, however much its practice has departed from this belief, and however little it is willing to assent to the cultus which Catholicism has built upon it. To the Catholic it seems a logical conclusion that the Eucharist, in which the worshipper identifies the offering of himself with the sacrificial offering of Christ, and in which rite and word vividly and dramatically express the Divine Condescension, is the archetype of social worship.

According to this view of sacramental worship, the function of the arts will be to enrich the dramatic movement, to clarify the symbolism, to deepen the adoration—being throughout in harmony with the conception of God which governs the whole act.

When an exclusive emphasis on the objective element in worship and other abuses in fifteenth century thought and practice, led the Reformers to reject the Great Sacrament as the norm of Christian worship, it is noteworthy how difficult it became to give just value to the objective element in worship. Divine Service concentrated more and more upon edification; its value was in proportion as it added to knowledge or stirred feelings. 'Reality' was measured by the 'impact' upon the worshipper. In the seventeenth century when the emphasis was on intellectual edification, Divine Service degenerated into a series of interminable sermons and logomachy; a state of things against which Quakerism was a significant protest. Since the Evangelical Revival, the emphasis has been more upon the emotional response. If the worshipper goes away 'unmoved,' 'untouched,' the Service is thought to have been lacking in reality.

The weakness of an over-emphasis upon the subjective element in worship becomes apparent when evangelical fires burn low, and the light of thought is dim, or when, as now, the hold of Puritanism is relaxed, for there is no standard to set against 'what the public wants.' If a congregation of worshippers wants cheap sentimentalism instead of the austerity of Puritanism, cheap sentimentalism it has. There are few things more pathetic than the throwing aside by the Protestant Churches to-day of the fine severity of Puritanism in favour of a vulgar, meretricious beauty which is unlovely as it is insincere.

The use of art in many Nonconformist places of worship and not a few Anglican, is a standing example of how art ought not to be used in worship. It fails on two counts. If primary importance is attached to the feelings of the worshipper then the art-forms used will tend to approximate to his character rather than to the character of God. It is liable in some places—both Roman and Protestant—to become a vulgar diversion giving a vulgar public the vulgar sentimentalism that it desires.

Moreover, this tendency to treat art as the sugary coating of the pill of edification becomes irresistible where there is no firm grasp of the sacramental view of life. Beauty is a dangerous power in life. Quickly, subtly may it come into conflict with moral idealism. Equally dangerous—and equally precious—is

it as an element in public worship. It will, sooner or later, work the undoing of those who use it without understanding its nature or acknowledging its place among the ultimate values. Those who cannot accept the sacramental view of life should be content with the beauty of simplicity, the beauty of plain surfaces and good proportions, the beauty of a Friend's Meeting House.

A 'sacramental view of life,' like 'reality in worship,' is a phrase so often used to obscure thought rather than to clarify it that I ought to say in a few words what I mean by it. Negatively, it is a view of reality which rejects as untrue to experience and fact a hard antithesis between matter and spirit, whether that antithesis takes the form of an ascetic condemnation of the things of sense, or the mysticism of the Quaker. Positively, it sees and feels that spirit and matter are deeply interfused. Beauty is a quality in *things* and experienced through the organs of sense; eternity is mediated through time; the Word becomes flesh. In this relationship there is a two-fold process. The visible, sensible sacrament is the outward expression of a reality which eye hath not seen nor ear heard; and the outward expression may increase perception and hold of the spiritual reality. Thus Baron von Hügel wrote:

> 'I kiss my child not only because I love it: I kiss it in order to love it. A religious picture not only expresses my awakened faith; it is a help to my faith's awakening. And the whole doctrine of the Incarnation, of any and every Condescension of God toward man—man so essentially body as well as mind— is against a "pure" spirituality . . . It is not magic, but a sheer fact traceable throughout our many-sided life, that we often grow, mentally and spiritually, almost solely by the stimulation of our senses or almost solely by the activity of other minds. Magic begins only when and where things physical are taken to effect spiritual results apart altogether from minds transmitting and receiving.'[1]

On a basis of what that loveable man called a 'pure spirituality,' the use of art in worship is strictly speaking illegitimate and always highly dangerous; even to a modified Puritanism it is at best an aid to worship or a decoration, at worst an attraction or a bait. But, according to the view of which a rough definition has been attempted, it is very means and vehicle of worship. Consequently, if the worship is not to be degraded

[1] F. von. Hügel, Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion, p. 251.

the form must be worthy of the object of worship; worthy as a gift offered to One who deserves a love greater than we can give or understand; worthy as a symbol of Him from whom comes every good and perfect thing in life. The criterion, therefore, of the art will be its fitness to mediate true God. While it need not be to the immediate liking of the average worshipper it has, so to say, to be to the liking of God. True worship, more especially in that Sacrament where the Church on earth joins in the worship of the Church in heaven, moves on a level of beauty and truth higher than that on which men habitually live. If I may quote some sentences of mine printed elsewhere: 'A liturgical office has, as far as is humanly possible, to express the truth, not "as Tommy sees it," but as it is in the mind of God. This means that the language shall be true in the sense of being exact, and also that it shall be "suggestive"—reminding the worshipper that what is hid from him is greater possibly than that which is clear to him—lifting him out of himself and beyond himself. There is all the difference in the world between the comment "this is high, I cannot attain unto it," and the comment "this is obscure, I cannot make head or tail of it." In both cases something has not been "apprehended": in the first, we have to do with a sense of mystery which a service ought to produce; while in the second, it is a sense of unintelligibility which a service ought never to produce.'

The last sentence suggests another consideration. A sacrament is a social act. The Holy Communion is a sacrament both of fellowship between God and man, and between man and man—a fellowship meal. Moreover, the distinctive feature of the English Liturgy is that the sacrifice offered is the sacrifice of the Communion rather than the sacrifice of the Mass, as the compilers of the Grey Book pointed out—a corporate offering made by priest and people in the Communion. Therefore the art-forms that are used ought not to be exotic or 'high-brow,' but to have the quality of folk-art—true and good, but 'good popular,' to use Mr. Martin Shaw's useful phrase.

In the time that remains may I, with these general principles in mind, make a few observations on three of the parts into which the art of public worship may be divided.

I. Ceremonial.

'Art,' Dr. Dearmer has written, 'is ruined by material excess as it is ruined by spiritual starvation.' Italian Art of the Renaissance, for example, was in the end the victim of its own dexterity and material excess. In the Art of Public Worship it is ceremonial which has most often been ruined by excess. To quote Dr. Dearmer further: 'At first dignified and beautiful, one petty ceremony after another was added to the ceremonial of the ancient Church, customs often meaningless, sometimes gross and superstitious, crept in gradually and very slowly; but, once established, the innate conservatism of men gave them a sacred prescription. The old outlines were obscured, the old purposes were forgotten, worship was crushed under a huge weight of foolish and minute ceremonies.'

The ceremony of Holy Communion, if only because the service commemorates the Cross, will be austere; but ceremonial there must be. The degree of formality will depend on the character of the building; but formality there ought to be. The celebrant, acting as representative, ought to be as little individual in his table-manners as is consonant with genuine devotion. These should be meaningful but not fussy, simple parable rather than elaborate allegory. The way in which the officiating clergy stand and move and group themselves educate and influence through the eye; and, more generally, simplification of movement and action tend to heighten solemnity. By contrast, an occasional lapse from dignity, an unpremeditated touch of humanity will never be out of harmony with a service that keeps close to human values.

II. Decoration.

It was a result of the Oxford Movement, inevitable but unfortunate, that the desire to decorate preceded by many years taste in decoration. Few indeed are the parish churches which have not been filled with the bric-a-brac of ecclesiastical furnishers. First light is shut out by banal coloured glass, and then in the darkness all manner of works of darkness are perpetrated: the natural lines of a building are distorted by additional steps

or meretricious ornament; the altar is obscured by choir-stalls, crowded by chairs and what-not in the sanctuary, and then disfigured by machine-turned brass and frontals of curious colour and meaningless design. Some or all these disasters have befallen many churches. Once done, the damage is not easy to undo, though tact may empty a sanctuary of some of its furniture as it may clear a lodging-house room of some of its bric-a-brac and oleographs. But as there are churches yet unspoilt and many still to be built, two principles of decoration may be mentioned.

Unless they are of genuine beauty, ornaments, apart from things of use (among these I should include pictures), are not desirable. Their sole justification is their power to refine and elevate the thought of God. And even of beautiful ornaments there can be too many. Our chancels are nearly always too full, both of people and things—missing the symbolism and effect of the emptiness of the Holy of Holies in the Temple—and they often seem fuller than they are, because there is no unity of thought and design in their furniture and decorations. In a day of peccable taste there is safety and simplicity in the keeping of large spaces.

Most important of all is the use of colour. Colour in large masses and well-chosen has an influence second only to that of music in subtilty and power to penetrate to the springs of action and desire. While few of us are good enough artists to know what is wrong with the decorations of a church, most people can see, still more feel, when they are right; for then they drive home the conviction more surely than any legend upon the walls, that God is in His Temple.[2]

III. Music.

The action of music, if fitting, upon the words of the Liturgy will be like that of the sun upon a garden of flowers, bringing out their colour and scent. If fitting. Whatever concessions may be made to popular sentiment in other services, they cannot be made here except, as it were, at the expense of God. Even

[2] It is hardly possible to give too much thought to the colour-scheme of a church. Advice may be sought from psychologist as well as artist.

those whose taste is too debased to enjoy good music ought to be able to find satisfaction in the knowledge that God is being offered His due. Association may in time do the rest.

None the less, it is desirable that the music of the Liturgy should be such as the people can sing. There is something indecent in the sight of a choir of which many are not communicants singing elaborate settings to the Office while the congregation of communicants is dumb. A sung Eucharist, indeed, is more likely to be worshipful if there is no choir, especially when the position of the choir in the chancel blocks all view of the altar from the nave. If there must be a choir let it specialise on introits and occasional anthems; and let the music of the parts of the Liturgy that are corporate acts of worship—Creed, Sursum Corda, Sanctus—be congregational, and as invariable as is the music of the versicles in Mattins and Evensong. The choral Communion at S. Martin-in-the-Fields, sung by congregation and voluntary choir among it, is a model to us all.

The selection of suitable music is not large. Many of the services on the market have been written by musicians who do not understand the service for which they are composing; most solemn moments—the Sanctus, for example—are spoilt by outbursts of florid writing that move on a very earthly plane.

Merbecke, in the original form, is hard to improve upon for constant use;[3] Martin Shaw has written a modal service which has the quality of the old and the right feeling; Missa de Angelis is a simple service constructed from mediaeval melodies; Arthur Somervell has written an easy service in modern style which when sung with care has something of the spirit of the modal music. For trained choirs there are the works of the sixteenth century writers to choose from; and for a few cathedral and collegiate choirs is Vaughan Williams' Mass which has been adapted to the English Liturgy.

Finally, meaning and dignity of worship can be enhanced or destroyed by hymns and their tunes, and by extemporisations, usually so unnecessary, of the organist. Often it is small things that mar an act of worship—a florid Amen at the end of the

[3] *Cf.* editions of Merbecke, that of Royle Shore published by Novello, may be recommended. Martin Shaw's Mass and Vaughan Williams are published by Curwen: the Missa de Angelis by Novello.

Prayer of Consecration, a maudlin tune set against Merbecke's Creed (not that a hymn should ever follow the Creed). Happy is the man that hath *Songs of Praise* to choose from.

There is need, surely, that the worshipful temper and habit should be revived and deepened among men. Some who feel this have not diagnosed the causes of the decline of public worship accurately enough, and consequently their efforts to stimulate the worshipful faculty in men may lead to the worship of a god who is less worthy of worship than God revealed in Jesus, our Lord. Is it not significant that the decline in public worship is contemporary with an increasing sensitiveness to the injustice of the social order? Public worship is the lifting up of the common life to the Father; and therefore I do not think we can hope for its genuine or complete revival until the consciences of men, so deeply offended by economic determinism and social divisions, are set at rest. On the other hand, a secondary cause of the decline has undoubtedly been an inadequate conception of worship, and the fact that much offered as public worship is not worshipful; one wishes therefore to see in our Church a re-instatement of the Holy Communion as the chief act of Sunday worship—a reasonable sacramentalism in harmony with the Christian gospel of God as well as with the need of human nature.

SACRAMENTAL TOLERANCE*

By the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc., author of *Religion and Science from Galileo to Bergson.*

Let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.—*Romans,* xiv, 4.

CHRISTIANITY is what is known as an 'other-worldly' religion; it embodies the belief in an 'eternal world' beyond this world. The belief may be variously formulated, and Christians may speak of 'heaven,' of the 'kingdom of God,' or of 'the supernatural'; the various expressions mean, in the last resort, the same thing.

But belief in this 'other world' not only finds diverse expression, but may even take quite different forms. The 'eternal world' may either be regarded as having the same relation to this world as a soul has to its body; or, again, as somehow lying outside or beyond this world, and occasionally intruding upon it, or interfering with it.

Such interferences or intrusions are called miracles, and the point about them is that they constitute clear and manifest evidence of 'another world' which might otherwise escape detection. If there be no such intrusions, the 'eternal world' may be everywhere, but what is everywhere may easily seem to be nowhere. We are not conscious, for example, of the weight of the atmosphere, because it is always there, nor yet of a sound that is continuous. God may be behind all phenomena, but a universal presence escapes detection; it conceals itself. The strength of the religion of miracle is that it reveals God, or the eternal world, in manifest fashion: we can see the supernatural with our eyes.

On the other hand, the weaknesses of the religion of miracle are no less conspicuous. (1) As it is generally presented, its miracles belong to the remote past, so that they have no link with present experience. When we desire a present miracle it does not occur. (2) The general tendency of scientific thought is either to deny the occurrence of miracles or to explain them otherwise than as interpositions of the supernatural. And the prestige of historical and natural science is such that their sceptical attitude has permeated nearly every cultural level of society. These weaknesses in the religion of miracle are disastrous. The situation is that the only religion of which the man in the street is capable is one in which he can no longer believe.

There remains that other form which the belief in 'another world' may take, that is that the eternal world is everywhere *in* or behind this world, if men have eyes to see it. Such is the view of the mystic. The strength of this religion of the mystic, as against 'miracle religion,' is that it preserves contact with present experience. Its weakness arises from the fact that the majority have little mystic sense, so that this can never be a popular religion, and it is a popular religion which is required to-day.

May it not be that there exists some *tertium quid* as well as the religion of miracle and mystical religion? Something which the man in the street may appropriate, and which the mystic may value?

It may be that this is the unique *rôle* of sacramental religion. Sacramentalism may stand between the cruder forms of miracle religion and the

* A Sermon preached before the Conference of Modern Churchmen in Girton College Chapel, Cambridge, on Sunday morning, September 12th, 1926.

more exalted forms of mysticism. A sacrament may be defined as the concentration of an idea in tangible and visible form, as the temporary embodiment of a permanent and universal principle. It enables us to find in a particular instance what the mystic finds everywhere, and thus may help us to do for ourselves what the mystic can do even without a sacrament to help him. It may sharpen our vision for the eternal world even in the normal events of present experience. Those who by faith find Christ's presence in a sacrament may learn to find it in unexpected places, and 'to see the Lord Jesus walking to and fro' in the ways of this world, as the old clergyman put it to John Inglesant.

Sacraments, however, have not been regarded only or chiefly as means of *gnosis* or enlightenment, but as means of grace, that is as the givers of new life and power. It cannot be denied that the recognition of man's need for the assistance of grace has suffered some eclipse. This is in part due to a misunderstood theory of evolution and in part to the superficial psychology which we inherit from the humanists and sentimentalists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But at bottom this repudiation of the traditional Christian idea of the need for grace is due to a personal attitude to life which has become almost universal.

An illustration may serve to make this clear. A tethered animal is not conscious of the chain which restrains its movements until it begins to desire to pass beyond the limits of the circle within which its chain imprisons it. So long as the animal is content to browse within the circle of which its chain is the radius, it feels free and at peace. But as soon as its desires and ambitions extend themselves beyond that area there follows a feeling of dissatisfaction and restraint; the creature feels the pull of the chain. The analogy applies in the religious sphere. The limited area where the animal can graze comfortably is equivalent to the moral and spiritual capacities of the natural man. So long as we confine our ambitions to this region, we shall feel the pull of no chain, the desire for no release, the need for no new power. In plain words, our ability to dispense with grace is due to a lack of spiritual and moral ambition. We do not ask the question whether there may not be levels both of conduct and of insight which are unattainable to unassisted human nature.

The sacraments, as givers of grace, stand as a witness to the eternal attempt of human nature to surpass itself and transcend itself, so that the 'natural man' may develop into the 'spiritual man.'

Sacraments have now been spoken of both as means of enlightenment and as means of grace. There is also a third aspect which is too often overlooked; they are also a means to fellowship. This aspect would seem to have been primary with St. Paul, who regarded the company of believers as the body of Christ. Here, as it would appear, we have an idea, which, if it were not too often obscured both in theory and practice, might commend the use of sacraments to many who are now inclined to neglect them. It is true that much sacramental piety is nowadays too individualistic. In the reformed churches the use of sacraments has tended to become the privilege of a devout minority; and minorities are often critical and self-centred, and inclined to be 'superior' and unsocial. But as their use is extended, this tendency should disappear.

Sacraments, then, may be regarded as means of enlightenment, of grace and of fellowship. It is not therefore surprising, nor to be regretted, that there should be signs of a revival of their use. And in the face of this revival, what is to be the attitude of Modern Churchmen? We may either ignore them, or oppose them, or whole-heartedly use them.

It is too true that sacraments have given rise, and still give rise, to many superstitions, and that they are very closely connected with some primitive rites which seem to us revolting or absurd. To take the latter objection first, we have to remember that it is not only sacraments that have had primitive and fantastic beginnings. Prayer itself has sprung from charms and incantations: science from magic: and art, as it would appear, from magic also. In the case of these, we do not fear a reversion to type.

With regard to the other objection. There is nothing that is not liable to abuse; and if a monopoly of sacramental worship is left to those who make a superstitious presentment of its effects and a mistaken account of the reasons for its use, we need not be surprised if abuses develop.

People of strongly rationalist and ethical temperament are inclined to be antagonised by external expressions of devotion, especially those associated with sacramental worship. Such expressions are taken to be due either to sentimentality or affectation. Yet there is an affectation in the avoidance of affectation, and it should be possible for such to make the sacrifice, not of conscience or intellect, but of anti-sacramental inhibitions.

'Let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him.'

THE TASK OF THE MODERNIST*

By the Rev. W. F. Geikie-Cobb, D.D., Rector of the Church of St. Ethelburga the Virgin within Bishopgate, E.C.2.

Launch out into the Deep.—Lk. v, 4.

EVERY age has its own peculiar task to carry out, its own problems to solve. And our age seems called on to say the last word on a controversy which has raged, with greater or less fervour, through the centuries. This controversy, which turns on the question whether the Christian Revelation is most properly interpreted as being miraculous, is of more than domestic interest. For, like all attempts to find and communicate some aspects of truth and reality, the result we achieve will affect the modes of thought and of living of multitudes who stand outside the arena.

The Miraculous.

The first thing to note is that anybody who goes about to deny the miraculous in Christianity will have the whole weight of tradition against him. For in the Old Testament are given stories in the lives of Moses and Joshua, and also of Elijah and Elisha which bear the hall-mark of the miraculous. But to question these would not perhaps disturb the serenity of the ordinary believer, if he were assured that the critic would not go on to apply his criticism to the miracles of the life of Jesus. Yet so closely are the Old Testament and the New Testament bound together that it is impossible to apply to them different measurements, for Christianity without Judaism is unintelligible as Judaism without Christianity is incomplete. The outworks and the citadel are of the same material, and are intended for the same purpose, so that what weakens the one endangers the other; if the outworks are carried it is only a question of time when the citadel fall.

* A Sermon preached before the Girton Conference in All Saints' Church, Cambridge, on September 12th, 1926.

Now it certainly looks as if the lives of Jesus, as we have them, are constructed round a skeleton framework of the miraculous. One account, but one only, definitely suggests a miraculous birth. In two the life of temptation is at least set in such a way as to take it out of the ordinary. On two occasions the forces of Nature are overborne by the miraculous power of Jesus. The third evangelist tells of a wonderful catch of fishes which seems to assume the miraculous, and this assumption is enhanced in the Appendix to the Fourth Gospel. All four relate a miraculous feeding of multitudes of people, while two give a doublet of the same marvel. Add to all these a number of stories of the healing of various diseases and the casting out of unclean spirits, and a *prima facie* case is made out for the traditional life of Jesus as of one to whom it was so natural to work miracles that to him might well be applied what was said of St. Vincent Ferrer, that it was a miracle when he did not work miracles.

The Miraculous Person.

But the chief reason why the authenticity of these miracles is maintained is that they witness to a miraculous person. Jesus Himself is the standing miracle of history. It is true that He came in the fulness of time, and so was in some relation to what had gone before, but this does not annul the fact that in Him a new thing had emerged. So truly, indeed, did the incarnation seem a new thing, that St. Augustine could say that he found in Plato all the rest of the Prologue to St. John's Gospel, but that he did not find in him the declaration that the Word became flesh, nor did he find any assertion that in due time Christ died for the ungodly.[2] And when we add to this that to St. Paul the whole superstructure of his religion was builded on his belief in a miraculous resurrection, leading to a miraculous exercise of power from the Christ sitting at the right hand of the Most High, we can but agree with those who urge that as our religion has been traditionally interpreted it rests on the indubitable fact that the New Testament writers set out the story of a miraculous person whose life was characterized by miraculous deeds.

The Doctrine of St. Thomas.

Great weight is justly laid by those who are impressed by these facts on the high authority of St. Thomas Aquinas, who lays down that a miracle is not what is contrary to Nature but is something beside Nature, not so much a violation of Nature as an addition to Nature. But he also insists that a miracle is not what is beside the order of some particular nature, but what is beside natural order taken as a whole; and he adds that to effect this none is competent save God Himself.[3] But another passage of St. Thomas, though equally pertinent, is not so often quoted. The term miracle, he says, is from *mirum*, marvellous, and wonder arises when effects are manifest while the cause is hidden, as when a man sees an eclipse of the sun not knowing its cause. For since the cause of any phenomenon may be known to one man and be not known by another, the rustic may find a marvel in an eclipse and the astronomer find none. So that a miracle may be defined as what is marvellous throughout as having simply a cause that is hidden from all, which cause is God. So that those things which are done by God outside causes known to us are called miracles.[4]

To this it seems well to add that in the preceding *Question* St. Thomas lays down categorically that for God to do anything contrary to any order which depends on the first cause, that is, on Himself, would be a slur on His providence, His will, or His goodness. But since any system of order which

[2] *Conf.* vii, 8. [3] *Summa theol.* i, cx, 4. [4] *Ibid.*, i, cv, 7.

depends on secondary causes is from His will, nothing hinders Him from acting outside any such system, on the ground that He might have instituted some other system. These explanations of St. Thomas may possibly serve as a bridge over which those who believe in miracles and those who deny them may freely pass, and so find that science and religion are not so hopelessly opposed as was thought.[5]

For we are living in an age whose tone is set, not by the Doctors of the Catholic Church, but by the high-priests of science. Between, say, a St. Thomas and a Herbert Spencer a great gulf is fixed. Can any pass from the one to the other? Are we permitted—we do not say to be religious, for none can hinder us in that—to be at once loyal members of the religious organization to which we belong, and at the same time to worship at the shrine of Truth as ordinarily understood? On the answer to that question hangs to a large extent the success or the failure of our Church to be an effective agent in preparing the way for the Kingdom of God. For any failure in Religion to recognize the claims of Truth must vitiate whatever else Religion may profitably learn. Nor has Religion any good ground for ignoring the claim of Science to be authoritative where the quest of Truth is concerned; though, on the other hand, it may rightly challenge any assumption that Reality has no other aspect but that which we call Truth.

The Claim of Science.

'The material of Science,' we are told, 'is co-extensive with the whole life, physical and mental, of the universe'; and if anyone says that there are certain excluded fields such as metaphysics, poetry or of the imagination, this is merely to say that 'the rules of methodical observation and the laws of logical thought do not apply to the facts, if any, which lie within such fields. These fields, if indeed such exist, must lie outside any intelligible definition which can be given of the word *Knowledge*.[6] And if theologians and others use the argument from design the scientific mind will declare the argument to be fallacious, 'investigate the origin of the fallacy, and show the nature of the process by which it has arisen.'[7]

The man of Faith will find something repellent in this cold austerity of Science, and will protest that any line of thought or conduct which issues out in a field of ice must stand, if not self-condemned, at all events as being incompetent to deal with the fullness of life. And he may even adopt in all seriousness the ironic conclusion of Hume that 'the Christian Religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity.'[8]

Yet the man of Faith, when he brings his religion down to the level of phenomena, is no longer at liberty to fix his attention solely on what is edifying, on what is ideal, or emotionally satisfying. He must play the game, if he plays at all, or stand aside. And the rules of the game are the rules prescribed by reason, and their animating spirit is that of scientific method. According to this method we get the result that a miracle is 'a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the inter-

[5] The ambiguity of the word *miracle* may be seen in the remark of Mr. E. G. Selwyn in the May number of *Theology* to the effect that 'we should view miracle as an extension of the constant interaction of God with man to which religion testifies, and of its overflow into the material order as illustrated in the healing effects of prayer and in sacraments.' This is unexceptionable, but it views a miracle not as St. Thomas viewed it, still less as Hume viewed it.

[6] Karl Pearson, *The Grammar of Science*, 1900, p. 15.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

[8] *Essays*, 1875, p. 108.

position of some invisible agent.' From which Hume infers the gener maxim 'that no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless th testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculou than the fact which it endeavours to establish.'[9]

How then does scientific thought deal with the miraculous stories whi are interwoven in the structure of our Gospels, and refuse to be remov from them without leaving a bleeding mass behind? The answer is tha Science is nothing if not critical, and that its business is, if it deals at a with history and its documents, to account for them under the necessar presupposition that all natural events are orderly, whether the order h known or unknown. In this matter, then, its tools are general histor psychology, textual criticism, logic and philology, all under the directio of the postulate of Evolution. And this criticism has been at work wit ever-growing confidence since Jean Astruc published his *Observations o Genesis* in 1755.

What then may be said to be the general effect of this steady fire c criticism on the traditional belief in the miraculous held by the professors c Christianity? In some quarters the effect has been merely to produce th gibe that higher criticism is all one with lower morality; but where mind have been open to the scientific spirit distress and perplexity have at firs resulted, to be succeeded in the more nicely balanced minds by a luminou assurance that a uniform order springing from indwelling Wisdom is a sure ground for Religion than any number of extraordinary happenings deter mined by a Will which was in no need of its 'counsel.'

That is to say, if the miraculous should be given up the result migh prove itself not a loss, but a gain. The exceptional, the arbitrary, the capr cious would be succeeded by a wonderland where every event, every thing and every person would be recognized as signs and tokens of the indwellin God. And the gain to religion would be so great that in its new dress i would seem to be a new creation, for, for the first time, there would flas before the inner eye the abiding truth of the saying that whatsoever is don upon earth God doeth it Himself.

Put into the form of a general axiom, it may be said that the criticisr of the spirit of Science on the documents of Religion aims at turning th exceptional which is outside the orderly into an instance of a rule of pur pose. When it succeeds in its aim the miracle may disappear as fact, bu it will be to re-appear as an element in the whole fact; what was impoten in its isolation becomes clothed upon with power by taking its place as factor in the one great cosmic movement which is God's standing self revelation. Emmanuel, God-with-us, throws off its historical swaddling clothes and proceeds to annex the whole of man's life, so that Science an Religion meet together, truth and feeling kiss each other.

The Miracles of Jesus.

Apply this new and better way of interpreting old truths to the inter pretation of the miracles wrought by Jesus. Criticism bids us see that som of these are parables, some are legends, and some are works which spring necessarily from what he was by nature.

(1) Among the parables are to be put foremost the works of Jesus whic the Fourth Evangelist uses as pegs on which to hang his doctrine. Among these are exaltation of the religion of the Jews into the religion of th Christians, set out under the form of the turning water into wine; the work ing of the Spirit in opening the inner eye of discernment, of giving powe

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 94.

to the lame in will and desire, and in the raising the soul from the sleep of indifference and the death of ignorance. But we should not restrict our maxim to a Gospel which is avowedly mystical.

In the Synoptics the story of the cursing of the barren fig-tree is by general consent a parabolic condemnation of that barren tree which was orthodox Judaism. The stater in the mouth of Peter's fish is a symbol of the truth that it is lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar. The story of the walking on the water, like the Book of Daniel, is intended to hearten Christians in days of persecution by the reminder that Jesus is still present with them, having overcome the world, and able to walk dryshod over its waters. Similarly, the stilling of the winds and waves is but an Oriental way of saying in distressful days, 'Be of good courage Christian soul, for though men rage against you, and threaten to drown you and the bark of your Church in the angry waters of imperial and popular hatred, yet Jesus, your Lord, who is at the right hand of God, can still the tumults of strife and give peace to His Church. And if you have to resist unto death, fear not, for He will give you the crown of life.' 'He that endureth unto the end the same shall be saved.'

(2) The legendary miracles are those which around a core of original fact have attracted to themselves a number of floating folk traditions with such power that the original has been overlaid by the later accretions, and altered almost beyond recognition. Such are the stories of the Gadarene swine, the feeding of the multitudes, the healing of ten men that were lepers, and the many stories of the casting out of unclean spirits. These latter, indeed, look as if in many instances they had their origin in the conversion of men from the worship of heathen gods (defined by St. Paul as devils) to the worship of the one true God.

(3) The third class of miracles is that under which fall the works of healing. It was inevitable that in an uncritical and unscientific age these works should be assigned a character of inexplicableness; it was also inevitable that, when the scientific method began to be established, an attempt should be made to explain them as the natural and necessary modes of expression of a personality unique in the range of its powers, but not yet excepted from the type of what is human. Magnetic healing, mental healing, faith healing, spiritual healing, the miracles of the Saints, or at Lourdes, may all be pre-scientific, but they testify to a deeply-rooted conviction that an orderly power is at work in our midst, and may possibly be bringing to the birth some of those greater works which Christ said that His disciples would do when He had returned to the Father.

Symbols.

Yet any such classification as the above will fail to convince because of the air of schematism in which it is so confined, that it cannot rise out of the mists of earth's lowly valleys. Some inevitable principle must be drawn down from the heights above to win the assent of a being who feels sure that he was not meant to die to the world of religion in order to make himself terribly at ease in Zion. And such a principle seems to be given us at the end of a great poem which moves uneasily along the border-line of two worlds—the Second Part of Goethe's *Faust*. There the sage concludes that

Alles vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis,

all phenomena are symbols; that is, in being what they are, they are significant of more. Nettleship illustrated this principle by asking how much of reality there is in the act of eating bread or drinking wine. And a person who realizes that the act of eating is the beginning of a process which ends in

the activities of the ruler, the artist or the saint, finds that the principle is being asserted throughout that bread, to find itself must lose itself; it must assimilate but it must also be assimilated. So that the act of eating, while it gives pleasure, and begins as an animal function, does not end there but becomes 'an agent in the highest life of man, not by *giving up* its niceness and digestibility, but by *means* of these.' Similarly, Nettleship contrasts 'the enjoyment of wine by the solitary depressed drinker, its enjoyment in delightful company, its enjoyment by a person in whom it almost immediately became a poem, and its enjoyment by a so-called "mystical" person in the Eucharist.'[10] The bread and wine remain what they naturally are, but the genius of man links them up with its highest and most daring experiences, and so exalts them and ennobles them, that they set out in visible form as symbols the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard. The transitory, the perishing ceases to be, or to seem, worthless, for it is taken up into the whole system of the things which abide, and it lives and continues to live in that whole. It is no longer a dead fact, but scintillates with the life which is life indeed, for it has heard and obeyed the law which bids all things to die that they may live. That which to the uninstructed eye is but a primrose by the river's brim becomes to the man whose eyes are opened a symbol of the immensity which gives thoughts which do lie too deep for tears.

Symbol and Dogma.

It is in this expansive power of symbols that their superiority over dogma lies. The dogma is an intellectual presentation of a truth enshrined in a fact, or indentified with a fact, and is not to be taken as containing more than it expresses. It offers itself for legal decision, and, therefore, excludes the indefinite reference to value which the symbol exists to suggest. It is one case of the mistaken attempt we are for ever making to mark off a bit of an ever-changing world, and to clothe it with the garment of constancy. The symbol on the other hand has no rest in itself, but suggests that each particular thing points to what is greater and deeper than itself, that the part is a sign-post which has no meaning apart from the whole to which it belongs.

The dogma, again, makes but a slight demand on feeling; it is content with obedience. But the symbol arises from the need to pass from the finite to the infinite, to see a world in a grain of sand, and God in the ordinary particulars of experience. In the symbol, therefore, is given the meeting-point of religion and art, as in the dogma religion appears in the dress of science. In neither, however, does objective reality yield itself, for reality is always more than its appearance. But certainly the symbol approaches nearer to the reality than does the dogma, and the dogma becomes valuable only when it is exalted into a symbol.

Symbol and Sacrament.

The symbol then, we may say, is a sign, but also it is something more than a sign, especially that particular kind of sign which ordinary language has agreed to call a miracle. But it is not quite the same thing as a sacrament. For a sacrament is a sign of a sacred thing which sanctifies its user, and though every symbol used religiously does this, yet this sanctifying efficacy is not explicitly expressed by the symbol. The symbol is an idea which gives substance to feeling, but the sacrament carries on the feeling into action, and may be said to be the symbol as perfected.

[10] *Remains*, 2nd Ed., 1901, p. 28 *f*.

Unfortunately, however, so soon as we begin to talk about sacraments, shades of the theological prison-house begin to close about us, and we are in some danger of losing our freedom, especially if we lower the symbol to the level of a dogma. But let us see what will be ours if we retain the upright posture of the freeman who claims his right to think and act for himself.

The Personality of Jesus.

In the first place, let us say with Baumgarten that the one great Sacrament of the Christian religion is the personality of Jesus,[11] by which is meant that the historical figure, with all its implications, as we have come to know it, is as a sign-post set up by the eternal wisdom in the midst of a perplexed world to direct it to the land of promise which flows with milk and honey. But all Personality, even that of the meanest of us, is an abysmal depth, only lighted up by the meteor flashes of the good and evil, of the pleasure and pain which are elicited by the changes and chances of life. And nineteen centuries have not been long enough to unfold the rich content of the Personality of Jesus, as, for example, is suggested by the attitude of Jesus in Holthorst's remarkable picture of Christ before Pilate.

And as that Personality is of the nature of a vast cosmic symbol, so are all the particular moments in His life, as they are recorded in our canonical writings, together with their verification in the experience of His disciples. For what that verification has brought to light is as truly contained in the symbol as anything written down in the canon, so much so that the validity of the record depends on the guarantee of truth supplied by the experience. We shall shirk no issue if we test our thesis by the doctrine of the Incarnation, the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, the Resurrection, the Ascension, Heaven and Hell, and the Sacraments.

The Incarnation.

(1) The Incarnation, when not darkened by theological learning, means that God became man, appeared as man, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. We say, 'appeared as man,' because had He appeared in any other form there would have been no Incarnation, and to appear as man can only be taken to mean that in becoming incarnate He submitted to the limitations of man's nature, and that in some sense He emptied Himself; and took on Him the form of a servant.

But does this supremacy of Jesus among men carry with it necessarily a uniqueness which separates Him from those He is not ashamed to call His brethren? Is not His incarnation a historical fact which is also a symbol, suggesting that of all men it is also true that they are incarnations of the divine? Are we bound in honour to regard Him as a jealous God who is best worshipped as One Who is remote, or may we not rather regard Him as the elder brother Who rejoices the more as we rise nearer to His supreme excellency? The man to whom all earthly things are symbols will have no doubt about what answer he should make.

The Virgin Birth.

(2) The dogma of the Virgin Birth attracts and repels at once as a subsidiary explanation of the mode of the Incarnation. It attracts minds which like their religion as clear-cut as a proposition of Euclid; it repels all who have learned that dogmas must begin by producing cogent evidence. But it would seem that what as a fact of physiology must remain dubious may

[11] 'The sole bond of a spiritually united Christendom is the Person and the Gospel of the Divine Founder.'—R. W. Inge, *Lay Thoughts of a Dean*, p. 301.

with a new setting be retained in the interests of religion. The asserted fact was intended to honour Jesus, but the honour was gained at the cost of all others. But what if it be a universal truth that the father in all human generation be God Himself, and that the earthly parents be but His instruments, or channels along which flow the currents of His creative activity? What if T. E. Brown be nearer the reality as a poet than theologians can ever be when he sings:

> Between our folding lips
> God slips
> An embryon life, and goes;
> And this becomes your rose.
> We love, God makes: in our sweet mirth
> God spies occasion for a birth.
> *Then is it His, or is it ours?*
> I know not—He is fond of flowers.[12]

In that case we have another example of the familiar truth that no fact is true unless it be ranged in the context of the whole fact. But the dogma of the Virgin-birth symbolizes more than a physiological law, as soon as we place alongside the mere fact its wider reference. For though the Old Roman Symbol was concerned merely with an assertion as against Docetists that the birth of Jesus from Mary the Virgin was actual, that assertion could not but be developed into the larger proposition that as man He was one with men in the whole range of their mortal interest while in His spirit He was one with the Eternal. The birth at Bethlehem came to symbolize the birth at the Jordan, and both together symbolized the opening stages of the revelation in history of that Personality which is Christianity's brief chronicle and perennial inspiration.

The Atonement.

(3) The atoning death of Jesus is to many the very ark of the covenant, to be touched by no Uzzah's hand; it was miraculous as having no preceding cause in history, but as being a direct and novel intervention of God for the salvation of a perishing race. And as such it has opened up to countless souls the road which leads to heaven, and plucked them from the slippery slope whose end is in hell. But it is more true and more reverent to say with the late Dr. Rashdall[13] that

> 'it is, indeed, a fact of profound significance that Christianity sees at once the ideal of humanity and the fullest revelation of God in One who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The whole character of the Christian religion would be different had it not done so: in that sense traditional theology is right in regarding the idea of an atonement through the death of Christ as the central truth of Christianity. Some death was, the earliest Fathers so often insisted, necessary to any real humanity in the Revealer. No kind of death could have revealed the sympathy of God so impressively as a death of suffering, voluntarily submitted to from love of the brethren. The atonement is the very central doctrine of Christianity in so far as it proclaims, and brings home to the heart of man, the supreme Christian truth that God is love, and that love is the most precious thing in human life.'

[12] *Collected Poems*, p. 691.
[13] *The Idea of the Atonement*, 1919, p. 454.

Dr. Rashdall also insists with Dr. Illingworth that 'the Incarnation is the atonement,' and that 'Christ's whole life was a sacrifice which takes away sin in the only way in which sin can really be taken away, and that is by making the sinner actually better'; and he suggests that many may well be content to say, 'The sufferings of Christ reveal to us the love of Christ, and the love of Christ reveals to us the love of God.' To which we may add that the atonement becomes effectual when, and when only, the love which Christ felt for men springs up with living force in the heart of the individual man and brings forth its fruit in his life.

But what is this but to say that the historical death, which to the casual onlooker at Calvary was but the death of one more malefactor, has ins. e the eloquent symbol of something as deep as life itself, which is mabol sorl and God's supreme self-revelation? It is in fact due to our powero val·es before and after, to weave our experiences one by one into a dorer·t system of truth and value, so that the single fact falls into line in a connected whole of reality—in short, to our power of creating symbols—that that, which taken by itself is a mere unmeaning fact of history, is exalted into a radiating star in the heaven where man finds himself one with his God.

The Resurrection.

(4) When we turn, however, from the facts of the Incarnation and of the death of Jesus, with all that their symbolism implies, to the stories of His resurrection and ascension, we seem to be moving on less solid ground. For in the two former we have given us the two facts of a birth and a death, both in the world of sense, while the physical facts of resurrection and ascension are, to many at least, not supported by sufficient evidence. To them, then, the truth is not in the fact but in the symbol itself; in a symbol, that is, which is not the enlargement of any sure fact, but rather hovers in the air than stands on the ground. But since every symbol must start from some fact, the resurrection and ascension will not be symbols at all, unless they rest on some fact. There does not seem any necessity, however, for this fact to be of the corporeal order. The voice at the baptism of Jesus, the revelation of Jesus in St. Paul on his Damascus day, the voices of the Maid, the fire of Pascal's ecstasy were not of the corporeal order, but they were real—more real, indeed, than if they had been primarily corporeal.

It would be a mark of rashness were anyone to pronounce dogmatically on the precise nature of the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection, or on the precise character of His ascension. But the fact is that something happened which the early witnesses read as appearances of Jesus, and it is these experiences of theirs which form the fact from which the symbol starts. And from the fact thus enlarged we are justified in our belief that the spiritual life of Christians, generation after generation, is rightly attributed to the continued activity of the Son of God from His heavenly throne. Belief in the historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus, taken by itself, has no specific religious import, but belief in the risen Christ issues necessarily in a correspondent life; but this belief is the product of a fact enlarged by symbolism into a fruitful truth.

Of the ascension it may be enough to say modestly, with St. Augustine, that at His incarnation Jesus came from the invisible into the visible world, and that at His ascension He returned from the visible into the invisible. And this should be enough. It was enough for the earliest witnesses, for their eyes were fixed, not so much on the historic departure, as on the constant activity of their Lord in the heavenly world.

Heaven and Hell.

(5) An earlier age, which was rough and rude in its habits of life, and was at the same time endowed with a powerful imagination and a spirit of slavish obedience, was able to persuade itself that a heaven and hell, both crudely conceived, were prepared through eternity as dwelling-places for the saint or the sinner. The joys of the one, the agonies of the other, were to be endless, and were thought of as coming within the categories of sense. In these days it is fashionable to dismiss both heaven and hell as fictions, and to suggest that they are not so much places as states of the soul.

> I sent my soul through the Invisible,
> Some letter of that After-life to spell;
> And by and by my Soul returned to me,
> And answered, 'I myself am Heaven and Hell.'

On the other hand, so modern a mind as that of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen tells us that 'it must be borne in mind that, though Christianity expresses the tender and charitable sentiments with passionate ardour, it has also a terrible side. Christian love is only for a time and on condition. It stops short at the gates of hell, and hell is an essential part of the whole Christian scheme. Whether we look at the formal doctrines or at the substance of that scheme, the tenderness and the terrors mutually imply each other.[14] But it is pretty certain that no heir of the New Learning, when he speaks of hell, means by it the fearful thing which is described in the *Inferno* of Dante. And even the mediaeval mind felt the necessity of toning down the horrors of hell by the lesser pains of Purgatory.

Once again the instrument of Symbolism comes to our aid by enabling us to retain all that was essential in the older doctrine and yet to abstain from pressing the pictorial into the mould of fact. It is easy enough for the modern preacher to proclaim baldly that 'there is no hell,' but if he be right he should be called on to account for the extraordinary tenacity of the belief in it in some form or other. If, however, we are content to say that the mediaeval belief, like the words of Jesus Himself, was an attempt to set out by symbols the vast gulf which is fixed between good and evil, while saying nothing about the precise nature of the resulting joys and pains, we shall once more find how happily even ultimate things come under Goethe's pregnant canon that what becomes is a symbol of what really is.

Sacraments.

(6) When we come to the question of Sacraments it is necessary to note that writers like Mr. Williams differentiate between sacraments and symbols by treating the former as '*verae causae*,[15] and not merely symptoms of the reception of grace,' and symbols as at their best being little more than 'optional appendages' to religion, whose impressive dramatic symbolism may work upon the subjective emotions of the worshipper. Sacraments 'present an element of divine invasion and hetero-suggestion, a power which comes entirely from without,' while the symbol stops short at auto-suggestion, or at most at congregational hetero-suggestion, and is merely declaratory, subjective and optional, not generally necessary but only helpful for salvation.

The Sacraments of the Gospel.

The Sacraments now pleaded for are two for which 'Dominical institution' is claimed, *viz.* Initiation and the Eucharist. The former, however,

[14] *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, p. 315. [15] *Essays Catholic and Critical*, p. 370 *f.*

contains Penance, Baptism and Confirmation, so that of the Seven Sacraments we have four generally necessary, and three instead of five referred to another category. And we cannot but admire the ingenious device by which the penitence originally required from the heathen catechumen is transferred to the Sacrament of Penance for post-baptismal sin. Of course, if it be a fact that these two great Sacraments were of 'Dominical institution,' and if they do therefore 'present an element of divine invasion,' the good Christian will accept them and use them and ask no questions.

But in spite of all the special pleading, by which it is sought to clothe these two sacraments (*as they have come to be explained*) with the splendour of a positive command, doubt of their origin still remains. Nor would the resolution of this doubt succeed in making the symbol something less venerable than a sacrament. For to the man who values a symbol aright, the symbol is by divine appointment, whether directly or indirectly, the means by which that which is eternal finds entrance into our being, and stirs us up to love and worship. It stands in no need of any special command; it is not dated, but is coeval with the birth of man, and is inwrought in the very structure of the universe. Indeed it is not too much to say that whatever it was that Jesus instituted, he did not create or invent it, but borrowed it from the world of symbols and then gave it a special application, or rather selected that one of its many possible meanings which he most desired to emphasise and crown.

The Two Schools.

In spite, however, of all the ingenious dialectic with which the theory of a special emergence of sacraments in history is set out and defended, and in spite also of all that the crowd of scholars have laid down on the opposite side, candour compels us to admit that the difference is more fundamental than can be reached by argument. On the Catholic side are ranged all who are led emotionally to assert what Höffding would call the kneeling posture of man, that is to assert the dependence of man on what is not himself, and the place of mechanism in the supply of his needs, spiritual as well as material. They are far indeed from denying the co-operation of man's will in the receipt of God's gifts, but it would be not unfair to say that they tend to minimise it. Sacramental grace is freely given, and is received in and by faith, but faith is more passive than active, more quietistic than the spirit which would enter the Kingdom with violence. Moreover this passive attitude towards God is accompanied inevitably with a similar attitude towards the priests who minister the grace of the sacraments. And from this follows that emphasis laid on the corporate side of the religious life which has won some distinguished converts in recent years, and may well win more.

On what has come to be called, somewhat unfortunately, the Modernist side, emphasis is laid on the parallel duty of maintaining the upright posture of man's soul, of safeguarding at all hazards the imprescriptible sacrosanctity of the essential Self as an indispensable agent of God; of cultivating an austere veneration for the individual spirit, and for the conscience as God's moral vicegerent; of keeping burning with ever increasing clearness the lamp of the Inner Light, which is none other but the candle of the Lord; while at the same time that the prophetic function of the individual is jealously defended, his duty to the corporate body he belongs to is frankly and even enthusiastically recognised.

It should be obvious that these two opposed points of view are contraries, not contradictories, complementary, not mutually exclusive, that

there is not merely room for both, but a necessity for both. The sole question at issue is as to their mutual relation. As, however, one stands for the principle of life and the other for organisation, Lotze's canon may perhaps point the way to reconciliation, which lays down that

> 'The true life of science consists in showing how absolutely universal is the extent, and at the same time how completely subordinate the significance of the meaning which mechanism has to fulfil in the structure of the world.'[16]

This canon, when examined, is the charter of the Mystic, and it is the Mystic who in the last resort holds the key of all the creeds.

Then and Now.

So, after taking this long way round, we come at last to the symbolic significance of the command to launch out into the deep. The Jerusalem Church found itself compelled by the force of circumstances to so lengthen its cords as to appeal to the wider world of Hellenistic culture, and to admit to its fold Gentile as well as Jew. It would have remained 'poor, unfledged, had it never winged from view o' th' nest,' through cowardice or conservatism. But through the boldness and persistency of the great Apostle of the Gentiles it took the fateful decision of steering the bark of the Church into the open sea; and, crossing the bar between Jew and Gentile, it succeeded in the providence of God in enlarging a Jewish sect into the Catholic Church.

The Church of to-day is faced by a problem similar to the problem set to the Church of the last decades of the first century. That problem is how, while preserving the continuity of life and tradition, to take the next step in the progressive movement of thought. Thought was never so free, so daring, so fully aware that something more than dialectic is wanted, so much in earnest, so well adapted to be a spectator of all time and all existence, and so ready to follow the argument whithersoever it may lead as it is to-day. A synthesis is needed of the manifold aspects of truth of which we feel assured—of physical science in general, of psychology, of art and of religion—and who is sufficient for this?

Our business surely is, while striving to know whatever thought may discover, to wait upon the Lord in humble and assured belief that, in his own good time and way, he will send that favouring wind which bloweth where it listeth to drive the bark of his Church over the waves of life's troubled sea to the haven where he would have it to be. Only we must exercise patience, learn humility, put aside narrowing interests and all sectarian and selfish aims, follow the gleam of other-worldliness, and above all have the courage both to conserve the past in the present and to use the present as the nurse of the brighter and more harmonious future.

Let us remember with St. Ambrose that it was not by dialectic that it pleased the Lord to save His people, but by inspiration from above, which creates the mystic's vision of the King in his beauty and of the land that is very far off. And in that faith, and with undaunted courage, let us cease to hug the shore of sect, or of party, or of partial truth, and launch out into the deep of all truth and all wisdom, as those who know that well roars the storm to those that hear a louder voice across the storm, bidding them to maintain an erect posture in this changing world, a kneeling posture in the temple of eternity, to be active to the things that are without, and passive to the things that are within.

[16] *Microcosmus*, Introduction.